ARE WE RESPONSIBLE FOR OUR TIME? . . By Ernst Toller

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THE Saturday Review OF LITERATURE

VOLUME XXVII No. 21 NEW YORK, SATURDAY, MAY 20, 1944 FIFTEEN CENTS

STRICTLY PERSONAL
by Jonathan Daniels

"THE CONDITION OF MAN"
by Lewis Mumford
Reviewed by Ordway Tead

"SELECTED POEMS, 1923-43"
by Robert Penn Warren
Reviewed by John Crowe Ransom

"MIDDLE AMERICA"
by Charles Morrow Wilson
Reviewed by Carleton Beals

"FAIR STOOD THE WIND FOR FRANCE"
by H. E. Bates
Reviewed by Ben Ray Redman

"PETER DOMANIG"
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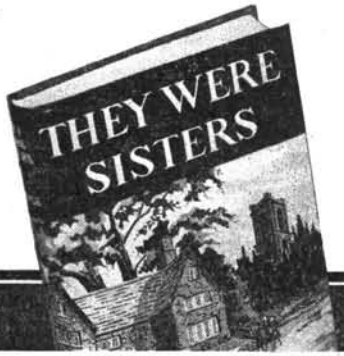

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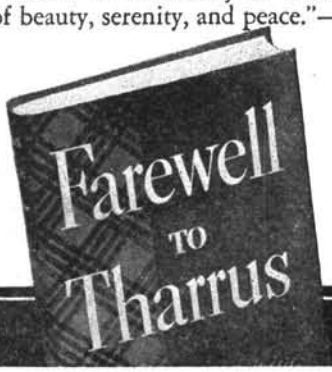

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The Saturday Review of Literature

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THE SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE, published weekly by the Saturday Review Associates, Inc., 25 West 45th Street, New York 19, N. Y. Harrison Smith, President; J. R. Cominsky, Executive Vice President and Treasurer; Amy Loveman, Secretary. Subscription, $5 a year; $6 in Canada and other countries; $4 for service men in U. S. At least 3 weeks' notice required for changes of address; both old and new addresses must be given. Printed in U. S. A. Vol. XXVII, No. 21, May 20, 1944. Entered as second class matter at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Indexed in the "Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature." Copyright, 1944, by Saturday Review Associates, Inc.

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THE CONDITION OF MAN

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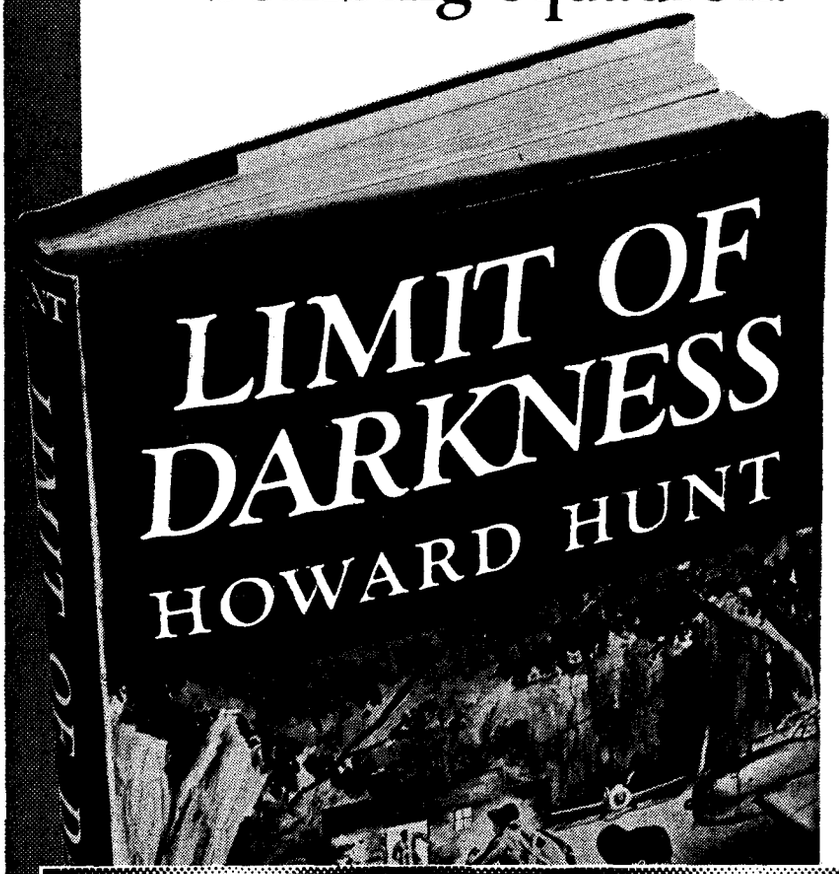

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Are We Responsible for Our Time?

Prophetic Commentaries from the Unpublished Papers of a Literary Giant

ERNST TOLLER

EDITOR'S NOTE: *May 22, 1944 marks the fifth anniversary of the death of Ernst Toller, German poet and dramatist, one of the major literary figures of the period between two world wars.* The Saturday Review *has come into the possession of a hitherto unpublished manuscript by Toller, from which the following excerpts have been taken. They are published not only because of their prophetic quality, but because of their present validity. The anniversary of Toller's death finds a controversy raging between those who have faith in the structure of a democratic post-war Germany and others who regard such ideas as dangerous illusions. That Germany should have produced a protagonist of democracy such as Toller, who wrote classic social dramas exalting the idea of freedom, is almost a sardonic commentary on both sides of the controversy, for the forces of Nazism were responsible for Toller's death, albeit by his own hand; he was as much a casualty of the war he foresaw as any of the millions who have been killed since it actually began. He believed that his biggest failure was to impress the people of his new American home with the size and shape of the threat he himself had seen and felt.*

THE crisis which we face today is a universal one. It touches the men and women of all walks of life; it touches the individual, it touches the community. The great ideals which bind us all, which give life integrity and dignity, are at stake.

As a rule people are afraid of truth. Each truth we discover in nature or social life destroys the crutches on which we used to lean. Truth is all very well, as long as it is not a home truth. But what people fear most is that they may have to put into practice truths which wise men have discovered. Many people have to surrender old privileges and everybody has to give up old customs without which life may seem hardly worth living. The old penalty for heretics was dramatic: death. The modern penalty is less drastic: boycott and social ruin.

* * *

The writer is forced to proclaim truth in spite of all hostilities. We shall never reach a solution without the will and courage to truth. Truth is a passion. One cannot learn it; one must possess it. The foundation on which true writing can grow is spiritual freedom.

Everywhere in the history of mankind we can observe this struggle between truth and superstition, between progress and human indolence of mind, between irresponsibility and responsibility. In former times the worst offense was an offense against God. Today it is an offense against the State. But often the greatest men have been the severest critics of their countries.

The basis of democracy is freedom and reason. Acceptance of the democratic ideology is not compulsory. The basis of fascism is blind belief and a contempt for reason. The citizen of a fascist country is forced to accept its ideology. Fascism exploits the fear of reason which lives secretly in the conscious and subconscious minds of many people. Reason means facing life and its facts. Reason means seeing the complexity of private and social relations, differentiating between objective forces and personal manifestations. It means sometimes blaming ourselves for failure, and sometimes realizing that this failure was caused not by personal shortcomings or by the wrongdoing of others, but by fundamental conditions which are independent of the good or bad will of individuals. It means, in one word, responsibility.

* * *

We all try at times to evade this responsibility in our private life in an attempt to escape reality, in the same way that certain African tribes make images of their enemies, stick pins into their hearts, and believe they have killed them. We do the same thing. We do not use images and pins, we use catchwords. We label a man with whom we do not agree a reactionary or a radical, although as a matter of fact he may be neither one nor the other. And we may not even know what the two words really mean. But we have annihilated him, and we are content.

* * *

What we do on a small scale is done by the fascist dictators on a large scale. They find a scapegoat, a scapegoat who will serve both for the past and for the present, one on whom man can load his own incapacity, his own failings, his own sins. Alas, it is the old sacrificial lamb of ancient days, except that now instead of animals, men are offered up for the sacrifice. There is nothing so absurd that it will not be used. It may be the theory of the supremacy of one race and the inferiority of others, it may be the abolition of the belief that all men are equal before the law, or the destruction of the Christian and Jewish creed that all men are brothers and God's children.

* * *

They succeed because too many people possess a fear of responsibility and a wish to escape into a mystical simplification of life and society. This fear of responsibility produces a reaction of frightened children who feel guilty, and, because they feel guilty, long for someone to remove this guilt, someone who will lead them and think for them. They want a leader, a Caesar, a Messiah, who will perform miracles, who will assume responsibility for the future, who will hold the mastery of all life, who will banish anxiety, abolish misery, create an empire of splendor.

* * *

We who returned from the World War were determined to enlighten the people and to make Germany a country in which the citizens took their fate into their own hands and did not allow emperors, generals, and big landlords to decide on war and peace. But unfortunately, the German people had for centuries been the tools of the state, they had for such a long time

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TOLLER'S 1930 PREVIEW OF "REICHSCHANCELLOR" HITLER

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The following excerpts, published in English for the first time, are from an article by Ernst Toller which appeared on October 7, 1930, in the Berlin weekly,* Die Neue Weltbuehne, *edited by the late Nobel Prize winner, Carl von Ossietzsky. The very idea of dignifying Hitler with the title* Reichschancellor *was derided in sophisticated quarters. For Hitler was a provincial upstart whose National Socialist Party was already in decline. His program was so much rubbish, stuff no thinking men could take seriously. Yet the prescience of Toller's analysis, now proved by events, arose from his clear perception in Hitler of the very literalness of the Nazi program. The two men had met in prison, Toller serving five years for his role in the Bavarian Socialist Republic; Hitler and his cronies spewing out the credo of "Mein Kampf" as guests of the state for a few months after the 1923 putsch. It was Hitler who singled Toller out as his arch antagonist in German life—Germany's outstanding dramatist, a spokesman for inarticulate millions, world-famous, a socialist, an intellectual, and a Jew.*

IT is New Year's Eve, 1931! Reichschancellor Hitler waits outside the gates of Berlin. The Republican leaders deliberate and deliberate, they put their heads together, they seek watchwords—and together with the State partisans they are ready, ready to be taken unaware. Let no one be deceived into thinking that a period of fascism, be it ever so temperate and subtle, will be transitory. They seem to overlook that the National Socialist Party's outstanding characteristic is its will to achieve power and to maintain it. National Socialism will have no objection whatsoever to receiving this power at the hands of Democracy but under no circumstances will it be willing to relinquish it upon Democracy's command.

* * *

It has often been said that we learn nothing from the past; evidently we learn nothing from the present either. Else we should bear in mind the methods of Mussolini, Pilsudski and others. With a stroke of the pen, Reichschancellor Hitler will abolish the achievements of which Social Democracy is so very proud. All republican socialist officials, judges, and Schupos will be removed from office over night and their places will be taken by "reliable" (fascist) Kadres. The Reichswehr will present no great obstacles to Hitler; in that quarter, he will only have to provide substitutes for "infected" Generals.

* * *

But what of the opposition, you will ask? Historical analogies no longer apply. Even in normal situations it is hardly possible to supplant the party that controls the Reichswehr, Police, Administration, and Justice. But military technique has made such strides that even should the opposition want to resist it, it could accomplish nothing against the instruments of combat, poison gas, tanks, and bombs, at the disposal of the Government.

* * *

But, the next rejoinder will be, considering the world political situation, Reichschancellor Hitler will never be able to carry out his foreign policy program—tear up the Young plan, abrogate the Versailles Peace treaty. Undoubtedly he will be delayed; yet he is already hobnobbing with Anglo-American capital. Though there may be only gestures at first for the benefit of the outside world, at home there will be immediate action along Party program lines. And this action will consist of naked, brutal terror, applied alike against Socialists, Communists, Pacifists, and the few surviving Democrats.

* * *

Every victorious party has offices and money to distribute. Hundreds of thousands of Hitlerites are waiting for such positions. But key positions have another value too. For whenever victory seems certain for one party, it usually finds countless hordes of interested people on its doorsteps, who have forsaken the defeated party and gloss over this severance of their former ties by particularly violent manifestations in favor of the new party ideology. Some politicians hold that Hitler's ideology is synonymous with the ideology of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie was never "obsessed" by an ideology; at all times it has been ready to change an ideology like a glove in consideration of its own interests.

* * *

There is still one power which could cope with fascism decisively—a united front of the free trade unions. But their leaders today are in mortal fear of the loss of property valued at millions and acquired through the pennies of the workers. Seven million organized workers have the ear of the public.

Will they face facts? Once fascism has gained sufficient strength, though it may spare them until then, at that moment it will assuredly not be halted by the trade unions.

* * *

Concerned as we are about domestic political worries, we must not overlook the situation abroad. We know already that the Briand cabinet will not remain to oppose Reichschancellor Hitler, but we must not forget that sooner or later in Great Britain the labor government will be overthrown by an extreme conservative one. Fascism in one country results in fascism in others. If nothing is done today within Germany, we face a period of European fascism, a period of provisional destruction of social, political, and spiritual liberty, from which redemption can be expected only after horrible, bloody confusion and wars.

The calendar shows New Year's Eve, 1931. This time the phrase *one minute before the zero hour* is no idle one.

---

been accustomed to obey that now only a small number of pioneers really understood the idea of the Republic which asked of every man and woman active participation and responsibility.

* * *

One thing can be said: it was not only the Treaty of Versailles and the economic crisis that brought about the collapse. The masses themselves are not free from responsibility for what happened. The people were weary of thinking and tired of responsibility. They felt only, "It can't go on that way!," and when finally someone came who took from them the burden of responsibility and the burden of thinking, they worshipped him and followed him in blind obedience. That was the way in which Hitler, the false Messiah, became great and powerful.

But Hitler was not the first, only the most successful, of the many false prophets who rose up among the German people. Innumerable modern witch doctors went through Germany and promised the people a paradise on earth. One for instance, Weissenberg by name, declared that he could heal all ailments of the body and of the soul by putting wet curds on the heart and on the forehead. Another man by the name of Haeusser said that he was an incarnation of Bismarck and Christ and that he would make Germany mighty and powerful and would become the emperor of the German Reich. Hundreds of thousands of disappointed Germans whose very world had crashed about them followed those and other men. They suffered and therefore they wanted to believe.

* * *

Statistics and proofs are no help against such a state of mind. All of us

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to a greater or less extent believe because we want to believe and not because a thing is true or reasonable.

Because in some states democracy has been falsified and degraded into an oligarchy of the big financiers we have no reason to speak of democracy as having failed and being out of date. Democracy is a milestone in man's evolution. The best of mankind have fought for democracy for centuries. Democracy has brought us freedom of conscience. The citizen gained the right to search and to decide in all questions of faith and knowledge. He is free to grow for he can overthrow customs and traditions that have become outworn.

The ideas of democracy which were formulated in America before being swept through Europe by the French Revolution have not failed. But we need an intensification of democracy: that means freedom plus social justice. Several countries, for instance America and Russia, are trying to find ways and means to that end.

True democracy today in the national realm means growing responsibility of the individual; and in the international sphere, increasing responsibility of the states. One could also put it that democracy is trying to lead mankind from the irresponsible attitude of the child into the responsible attitude of the adult. Fascism however means just the opposite. It does not create political or social order but disorder sustained by terror. Marching feet become more important than thinking heads. The citizen is treated like a little schoolboy who has the misfortune to have an unreasonable headmaster. As Mr. Winston Churchill has said, "How could we bear to be treated like schoolboys when we are grown-up men; to be turned out on parade by tens of thousands to march and cheer for this slogan or that; to see philosophers, teachers, and authors bullied and toiled to death in concentration camps; to be forced every hour to conceal the natural workings of the human intellect and the pulsations of the human heart."

* * *

We know from pedagogic experience that prolonged blind obedience kills every form of self-respect and responsibility. By and by a longing to obey takes their place and this leads to a general masochism. The masses are prepared for war and become an element of unrest and menace for the rest of the world. As reality is not kind to them, they lose themselves like children in dreams. Conquests of countries, suppression of other cultures and races are in these dreams.

This drawing by Frances O'Brien Garfield is the last-known portrait of Ernst Toller.

In order to ease their conscience, they must explain that these other people and races are inferior. That is why the myth of the chosen Aryan race has been invented. But no believer in the race theories can stand up to the forum of serious and free scientific research. Thus, this becomes one of the reasons that free research is suppressed in present-day Germany. The Nazis need these theories to justify the most primitive and coarsest passions in man.

The persecution of the Jews is no private matter at a time when the League of Nations is pledged to watch over the rights of minorities. The League can fulfill its mission only if it protects the rights of all people. The League tries to stamp out slavery and to create international convenants in order to avoid epidemics. As the race theory, too, is a spiritual epidemic which is dangerous to life, it is necessary for the League of Nations to find means to halt the spread of this disease. No, the question of right and wrong is no national question. The wrong done to one human being is a wrong done to mankind and everyone is responsible for it. We must recognize that we are all humiliated together, that we must come together in common defense and deed. That is nothing more than self-defense.

* * *

For Nazi propaganda is poisoning not the German people alone. With great cunning and immense supplies of money they are sending out those poisonous germs into all the other countries in order to prepare a world epidemic of spiritual madness. Man is menaced. The foundations of civilization are menaced. The dictators want to create a state of mind in which the citizen says, "Here I stand, but I could also do otherwise."

* * *

From whence did the Nazis derive their strongest support? From the unemployed, and especially the young unemployed. The German Republic thought it was enough to supply them with a little money for food, just enough to keep them from starving. But it was not enough. These young people had lost their hope. They wanted what everybody wants—to find a meaning in life.

And there Hitler stepped in. He gave them uniforms. He taught them drill and discipline. But also he demanded from them sacrifices for the future. And he gave them hope for the future. Here he revealed a greater insight than the rulers of the Republic. And from this comes my warning to you. You have also in this country millions of young men and women who despair of their future. It is not enough to pay them a dole. Give them hope for the future, knowledge, and a share in the cultural achievements of American civilization. In this way you will make them immune to fascist infection. I have seen too many people who, even as Esau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage, have sold their freedom for the illusion of security. And then it was too late. It is sad that only after one has lost freedom does he learn what freedom really means.

We cannot fight the fascist danger which infects civilization all over the world and undermines everything that makes life worth living by making compromises. It is necessary for democracies to make the democratic conception so strong that no intellectual earthquake can shake it. The democratic concept must become a part of the daily life of every citizen.

* * *

All of us, and especially those who have seen and felt the horrors of the last war, hate war and love peace. We know that a new war may mean the end of our civilization. But it is not sufficient to want peace. One ought to state clearly what kind of peace one wants and how this peace is to be achieved. That peace only is worth working for that gives big and likewise small nations the opportunity to live according to their ideas and standards.

Above all, such a peace presumes freedom and justice within the nations themselves. But if a government employs brutal force, injustice, and suppression against her own people, one has to draw the conclusion that her foreign policy too will be guided by the

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same principles. No government can disregard principles within its own boundaries and suppose that loud praises of the very same principles to the outward world will be believed.

* * *

The dictator who talks peace to other countries ought to ban first all war propaganda from schools and universities, from school books and newspapers. The dictator who flatters the friends of peace outside his country and persecutes those in his country, as for example, Ossietzsky, Thaelmann, Mierendorf, proves only that for him the peace of today is a means to prepare the war of tomorrow.

* * *

National and international confidence are founded in free responsibility of the people. He who wants real peace must be prepared to fight for this peace. True peace asks for heroic deeds and sacrifices. No pacifist will deny this.

* * *

We are in the midst of an assault against the spirit, against human conscience. We have to make a decision. Generations and generations have fought for the spiritual freedom of man. Martyrs have suffered and died for that ideal. Today it is our duty to defend this most precious possession of mankind. A common front must be created where all those come together who are willing to defend civilization regardless of their different religious and political views. We may have different opinions, we may work for different political aims, but in this hour of deadly danger those differences are not important. We may go our different ways after we have succeeded together in securing the basis which alone makes life worth living: spiritual freedom and individual responsibility.

* * *

For today again the cry is ringing out: The barbarian is outside the gates! We all are threatened without exception. The fate of our times depends on the responsible decision of every one of us. *Tua res agitur!* Your cause is at stake! Our common cause is at stake!

* * *

This is a time when insight is needed and courage. Do not think that indignation and emotion are enough. You will succeed only if, beside hatred for the things you despise, there is in your heart and in your mind love for the things you want to uphold and to create. Such love is powerful and unconquerable. It will not yield to threats. It will not grant tolerance where tolerance becomes treason by opening the way for violent destruction of the basic human rights and civil liberties guaranteed by your Constitution. Defend them!

Man in Search of Himself

THE CONDITION OF MAN. By Lewis Mumford. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company. 1944. 467 *pp.* $5.

Reviewed by ORDWAY TEAD

FORWARD to synthesis, the conditions of renewal, the development of modern man,—it is phrases like these which give the clue to the last volume of Lewis Mumford's trilogy. Let the author tell at once what his substantial treatise is up to. "My aim has been to give a rounded interpretation of the development of modern man, and to show what changes in his plan of life are necessary if he is to make the most of the vast powers that are now his to command—provided he be strong enough, wise enough, virtuous enough, to exercise command."

"If we have not time to understand the past," he continues, "we will not have the insight to control the future; for the past never leaves us, and the future is already here." And that Mr. Mumford asks his reader's time for this retrospective understanding is evidenced by the 423 pages which he offers. Indeed one wonders, without at all being captious, whether in his teaching work in the Humanities at Stanford University he did not find that he needed a synthesis unlike any he could find and thus has assembled this remarkable resume in his own inimitable frame of reference.

For we find here a study of the historic influences beginning with Greece and Israel which have helped to make us what we are today in material, esthetic, political, amorous, and religious standards, attainments, and inadequacies. The analysis is properly to be read as a description of the human personality in action and in aspiration, as seen against the author's prior, superb orientations of the technologies which man has fabricated ("Technics and Civilizations") and the city living which has come in their train ("The Culture of Cities").

The delineation here of antecedent background is leisurely, highly selective, interpretative of men and of their creations in suggestive and highly individual appraisals. I am not competent to evaluate the accuracy of so rich a store of record and of interpretation. I know that the result is interesting and the total upshot is revealing, disturbing, appealing, and elevated.

—*Howard Thomas*

What is offered is a review of the seminal personalities and ideas of Greece, Palestine, and Rome, of medieval life and dissolution, of the subsequent "upsurge of vitality," of the reformation period, of the impact of new world discovery, of "the emergence of modern man," of the nineteenth century influences and of the "dissolution" ensuing therefrom,—with finally a sketching of the "basis of renewal."

It is profitable, perhaps crucial, to examine the portions of this vast panorama where the characterizations seem most fresh and vital. Mr. Mumford vividly illuminates the life and character of Jesus. It will not command universal assent. But it brings the person and life of Jesus into relation to the contemporary world and to organized Christianity with a sense of relevance and of elevated suggestion which is as refreshing as it is spirited. The temptation to quote in order to convey the flavor of all this must be resisted. This author's gift of epigrammatic phrases is by now well established. Suffice it to summarize the following: "The man who is nailed to the cross on the Mount of Calvary is the incarnation of humility, love, and sacrifice: humility proudly won, love lifted into kinship with all humanity, death made the willing utterance of life itself;—complete affirmation of man's condition and man's end." "Of Jesus one may say without irreverence, that he was not a Christian." "The vision of Jesus was one of health, life, renewal."

In discussing "the uprising of the libido," the author follows his picture of the more obscure ages with a characterizing of the art, the country-house life, the sexual relations, the ideas of the gentleman, and the saint, which gives a graphic sense of vital influences in the human spirit coming into fuller acknowledgment and richer understanding. This sharp definition of cultural transformation is what Mr. Mumford does with great deftness and feeling. He humanizes the past for us upon points of behavior which have not interested the conventional historian. He keeps us central to what the human spirit was typically concerned about in a way to add illumination and depth to the ultimate picture of the developed man and the enlarging person as he is aiming to present it.

Similarly in delineating the influ-

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ences at work in the nineteenth century—those which had to do with "mammonism, mechanism, and despotism"—he turns the light of astute analysis on such familiar figures as Marx, Darwin, and Freud. And he accords to each of these a place of value qualified by limitations which are shown to be disintegrative and tragic in their consequences.

Where in this portrait which casts a long backward shadow do we find these forces of disintegration, which it is the author's ultimate purpose to underscore? For he sees his history as integration and disintegration dialectically at work in the centuries he portrays—with the present as an "all-enveloping crisis" out from which he believes arises "the condition essential to a renewal of the personality and the community."

The present world, we are told, is betrayed by science which opened the external world but "shut the self out." Here lay the beginning of a split in Western personality. Western man in his conquests "ravaged, defaced, or corrupted the people to whom he brought 'civilization.'" "By his very pride Western man contributed to his own impoverishment." "Every gain in power . . . has proved potentially dangerous because it has not been accompanied by equal gains in self-understanding and self-discipline." Those who were interested in social revolution and reform sought "to transform the institutions of society through self-interest, and create a high order of social existence without bothering to develop and discipline a higher type of self." "Many of the miscarriages of the present period are due to the fact that our statesmen, our industrial leaders, our administrators, are still trying to apply the ideology of the age of expansion to a social organization that has an entirely different set of requirements."

When one asks where and how the conditions of personal renewal are to be found, the answer is clear enough; it is suggested here and there throughout the book; it is brought together in the final chapter on "the basis for renewal." We are to conclude that devotion to great personality will produce great personality. The whole portrait of Jesus is designed to suggest inspiration and aspiration. Mumford cannot escape declaring that "it is the individual who must be first saved; saved by escaping the meshes of his society and becoming part of a new community in which his life-needs are respected and satisfied." The idea of salvation thus bears little relation to the evangelical one but there is repeated insistence that the individual has to move out of a self-centered spirit to a commitment to community obligation which is imperative. "There is no solution through naked self-worship: God must work within us. Each man and woman must first silently assume his own burden." "The beginning and the end of this process (of having ideas socially operative) is the incarnation of the idea in a human person." And the idea of the

developing rounded person of our own time is given substance in the touching and moving biographical appreciation of Patrick Geddes whose disciple the author has long been proud to be. Also "the attitude and fundamental philosophy of the post-machine age" are expressed by Waldo Frank whose more recent writings have endeavored to express a modern mystical yet earthy faith.

The basis of renewal which can carry our age out of crisis and into a new era of integration is thus, in Mumford's view, a restoration of persons to dynamic balance. "Our first task is that of self-examination, self-education, self-control." "Only in one place can immediate renewal begin: that is, within the person." In the deep and simple meaning of religion, it is to religion that the present condition of man looks for its necessary development and for its conversion from little preoccupations to large loyalties. Yet, despite these quoted sentences, the acknowledgment of religion as critical and powerful seems somehow timid and restrained. Mumford seems to be traversing a terrain which he has come upon so newly that he has not all his landmarks. Where we look for eloquence and ringing conviction we get less than that—not in substance, perhaps, but in depth of feeling. One would have valued a still further chapter on the ways and means of renewal—even on the regimen of faith.

Always noble in spirit and generous in sentiment, Mumford somehow articulates less than one feels the need for in his religious affirmation. In this he is no doubt a child of his age for which the symbolic not to say the intellectual formulation of new religious synthesis is still ahead. Meanwhile this book is highly symptomatic of a growing sense of human need as well as of the general area of spiritual concern in and through which that need has to be met. If we hear no temple bells, we at least behold a helpful signpost of the right direction. The wise sentence of Whitman which Mumford quotes is true of this book, as it is true of our own age: "it is provided in the essence of things that from any fruition of success, no matter what, shall come forth something to make a greater struggle necessary."

C. F. Coe of the "Satevepost"

NEVER A DULL MOMENT. By Charles Francis Coe. New York: Hastings House. 1944. 326 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by PHIL STONG

MR. CHARLES FRANCIS "SOCKER" COE is quite a fellow and admits it frankly in this autobiography; frankly and so incessantly that the tune becomes monotonous. Most men have heroic episodes in their lives, but few escape without an equal or greater number of jackasseries, futilities, or occasions to which they are inadequate, at the very least. Jack the Giant Killer is perhaps the last recorded instance of one hundred per cent giant killing.

Mr. Coe is probably best known for his fight and gangster stories in *The Saturday Evening Post.* These came out of his youthful experience as a professional fighter and his acquaintance with the major figures of Prohibition gangsterdom. His authorship, however, represents only a small part of his career. He began as the rather amusing bad boy of his town—many of the episodes are funny but this section runs too long—and, as many bad boys did, ran away from home to join the Navy.

The Navy section is extremely good reading and good writing; it is as good as "Delilah" and "The Sea Wolf," but, alas, too brief, and it has to include the young seaman's improvement of the literary tastes of one of his commissioned officers. Subsequently Mr. Coe went into business and is quite justly proud of having become the manager of one of the country's larger automobile branches.

Writing, radio, pictures, law, and frolicking follow in chronological but somewhat confusing arrangement. The names of the great and of the gangsters come in by scores—usually only once in full; after that it is "Deac" and "Jack" and "Lee" and "Charley."

The book is, perhaps, a trifle self-conscious.

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The Inklings of "Original Sin"

SELECTED POEMS, 1923-43. By Robert Penn Warren. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co. 1944. 102 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by JOHN CROWE RANSOM

OF more than seasonal magnitude is the literary event which gives to the public the whole staple of Robert Penn Warren's poetry. For ten years my head has rung with magnificent phrases out of the five poems which he contributed to a Special Poetic Supplement in *The American Review* of March, 1934. I felt they must have made a great commotion (as I knew they had not) and established him at once as a ranking poet; they were so distinctive, those poems of twenty lines each, with their peculiar strain of horror, and their clean-cut eloquence and technical accomplishments. But evidently the rating of the poet waits upon the trial of his big book. The five poems are in the present book, and serve very well as its center, though some later ones may define a little better the special object of this poet's tragic sense.

For a text I will try the easiest of the five, "Aubade for Hope." The speaker (or hero: sometimes he is in the third person) appears to be an adapted and adult man waking, in the company of his bride it would seem, in the Kentucky farmhouse on a winter morning:

Dawn: and foot on the cold stair treading or
Thump of wood on the unswept hearthstone is
Comment on the margin of consciousness,
A dirty thumb-smear by the printed page.

Thumb-smear: nay, other, for the blessed light
Acclaimed thus, as a ducal progress by
The scared cur, wakes them that wallowed in
The unaimed faceless appetite of dream.

All night, the ice sought out the rotten bough:
In sleep they heard. And now they stir, as east
Beyond the formal gleam of landscape sun
Has struck the senatorial hooded hill.

Light: the groaning stair; the match aflame;
The Negro woman's hand, horned gray with cold,
That lit the wood—oh, merciless great eyes
Blank as the sea—I name some things that shall

As voices speaking from a further room,
Muffled, bespeak us yet for time and hope:
For Hope that like a blockhead grandam ever
Above the ash and spittle croaks and leans.

The waking is out of a dream in which the speaker was faced with some nameless evil, and he is glad to be woken; and the dawn to which he wakes is a symbol of hope though sadly short of brilliant in its accessories and triumphant. The waking

—Photo by Raymond Dannenbaum
Robert Penn Warren

or rational world does not altogether displace the dark world of the unconscious. The "merciless great eyes" that are addressed in parenthesis bring a difficulty of identification; they are new in the present version, having displaced some less telling original item. But in the light of other poems I should hazard that they belong to an ancestor, or a ghostly mentor, and survive from the dream as a counterpoise to hope, and attend their victim much as the Furies would attend the Greek hero under a curse. We feel they will not be propitiated though the citizen start punctually on his round of moral daylight activities.

But what is his curse? "Aubade for Hope" is of the very type of the Warren poems, whose situations are always fundamentally the same. It is true that the poet is fertile, and I find quite a few titles to suggest his range of variation upon the one tragic theme; as, "Terror," "Pursuit," "Crime," "Letter from a Coward to a Hero," "History," "End of Season," "Ransom," "Aged Man Surveys Past Time," "Toward Rationality," "To a Friend Parting," "Eidolon," "Revelation," "Variation: Ode to Fear," "Monologue at Midnight," "Picnic Remembered," "Man Coming of Age," and the Marvellian "The Garden." It is the quality of a noble poetry that it can fixate powerful living images of the human crisis, and be received of us with every sense of the familiar, yet evade us badly if we would define its issue; and that is why poetry, intuitive in its form like religion, involves us in endless disputation when we try to philosophize it. I proceed with peril, but I rely on a conviction that Warren's version of horror is not only consistent, but more elemental and purer than that of other poets. For there was Poe, for example, with whom it was almost vulgarly "literary" and supernatural; and Baudelaire, for whom it recorded his implication with the monstrous and obscene, and his detestation and disgust. The terror they felt was perhaps chiefly for crazy breaches of the common moral code, but ours here is stranger and yet far more universal than that.

The recent poem, "Original Sin: a Short Story," furnishes us with a philosophical term, or at least a theological one; which we should use provided we remember that the poet has not put all his secrets into one word.

Nodding, its great head rattling like a gourd,
And locks like seawood strung on the stinking stone,
The nightmare stumbles past, and you have heard
It fumble your door before it whimpers and is gone:
It acts like the old hound that used to snuffle your door and moan.

You thought you had lost it when you left Omaha,
For it seemed connected then with your grandpa, who
Had a wen on his forehead and sat on the verandah
To finger the precious protuberance, as was his habit to do,
Which glinted in sun like rough garnet or the rich old brain bulging through.

But this nightmare, the vague, inept, and not very presentable ancestral ghost, is not to be exorcised. It appears even in Harvard Yard, for the victim's handsome secular progress has led him so far, where the ghost is ill at ease indeed. But you must not think the illusion of the ghost is the form of the speaker's simple nostalgia, for that is painful, too, but goes away:

You were almost kindly then in your first homesickness,
As it tortured its stiff face to speak, but scarcely mewed;
Since then you have outlived all your homesickness,
But have met it in many another distempered latitude:
Oh, nothing is lost, ever lost! at last you understood.

This ghost will not be laid. Yet it is an ineffectual ghost, unlike that portentous apparition of Hamlet the

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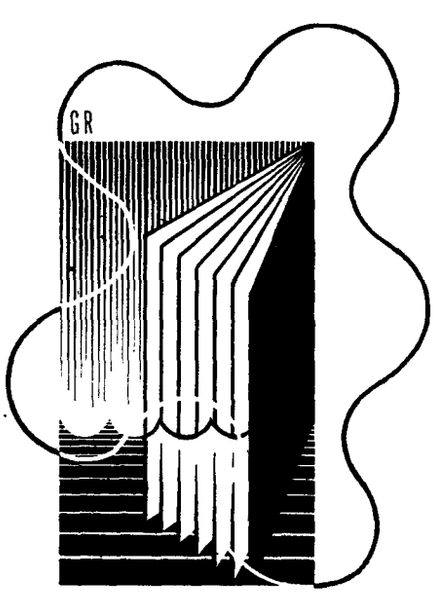
Elder, which knew so much about "theatre," including how to time and how to make an entrance: our ghost does not interfere with the actions of the living.

But it never came in the quantum glare of sun
To shame you before your friends, and had nothing to do
With your public experience or private reformation:
But it thought no bed too narrow—it stood with lips askew
And shook its great head sadly like the abstract Jew.

Never met you in the lyric arsenical meadows
When children call and your heart goes stone in the bosom:
At the orchard anguish never, nor ovoid horror,
Which is furred like a peach or avid like the delicious plum.
It takes no part in your classic prudence or fondled axiom.

We must return to the title, and take its consequences: Original Sin. And here it may be of some moment that we ourselves have had dire personal inklings of Original Sin, hustled and busybody creatures as we are yet perhaps painfully sensible of our treachery to some earlier and more innocent plan of existence; or, on the other hand, that we know it by theology and literature. The poets and priests who dramatize it in Adam's Fall seem to have known it precisely in the same sense with Warren's protagonist; and historically it has proved too formidable an incubus to rate as an idle "metaphysical" entity, for it can infect the whole series of our human successes with shame and guilt. Briefly, Original Sin is the betrayal of our original nature that we commit in the interest of our rational evolution and progress. Anthropologists may well imagine—if they are imaginative—that the guilt-feeling of Original Sin, though it opposes no specific adaptation or "conditioning" of the pliant human spirit, might yet have some business on the premises as an unassimilated core of resistance and therefore stability; so precarious would seem the unique biological experiment of equipping an animal species with reason instead of the law of its own nature. Original Sin obtains a sort of poetic justification when we consider the peculiar horror to which the strict regimen of medieval monks exposed them; acedia; the paralysis of will. Or, for that matter, the horror which has most shaken the moderns in their accelerating progress: the sense of psychic disintegration, that is, of having a personality which has been casually acquired, and is still subject to alteration, therefore hollow and insincere.

By the present account Original Sin seems to be nearly related to the Origin of Species—of that species at least which is most self-determining of its behavior. It may be tempting to assume, and dogmatic theology at its nadir of unrealism is apt to assume, that the blame falls only on Adam, and we are answerable only in some formalistic sense to Adam's ghost. But here we should take into account the phenomenon of "recapitulation"; for it is understood that individually we re-enact the evolution of species. We do it physiologically, but there is a conscious side to it too. We have a nature, and proceed to "condition" it; and more and more, from age to age, are subjected to the rule of reason, first the public reason which "educates" us, and then, when we have lost our native spirits, our own reason which draws corollaries to the public reason. If we may venture now upon a critical impertinence, and commit the biographical fallacy, we will refer the nightmare of our poet's verse to the admirable public datum of his life, to see what edification it will bring. As follows. The South Kentucky country of his nativity is distinctive among landscapes, and the sense of it is intimate and constitutive in the consciousness of its inhabitants; and his breed, the population of that country, acknowledges more firmly than another the two bonds of blood and native scene, which individuate it. If then the ancestral ghost really haunts the mature poet, as the poetry professes, it might be said to have this excuse, that the circumstance of his origin is without visible consequence upon his social adaptiveness, which is supple and charming, or upon his capacity for such scholarship and industry as his professional occasions may demand, which is exemplary. The poetic torment of his sensibility is private, and yet here it is, published. But we need not think it something very special. The effect is universal as philosophers use that term: it is the way a fine native sensibility works, in those who have the sensibility and keep it.



Besides the poetry, Warren has a well-known body of fiction, including an important recent novel; the aforesaid nightmare of Original Sin showing in the fiction too. But the poetry, I think, is superior to the fiction, for a curious reason. Warren has fallen in increasingly with the vogue of the "naturalistic" novel; and this means that he likes to take low life, or at any rate life with a mediocre grade of vitality, for his material. His characters are mean, and inarticulate too, though their futilities and defeats furnish him faithfully with documents of the fateful Original Sin. But they do not know what tune they are playing, and the novelist has the embarrassment of having to speak for them. In the recent novel, "At Heaven's Gate," he has to contrive a quaint though marvelously realized rural saint, to furnish a significant commentary; and it is not very organically connected with the action of the plot.

I mention this because Warren begins to import the naturalistic method into his verse; as in the Kentucky ballad of "Billie Potts," the most substantial poem in the present volume. With great skill he expands the primitive ballad form (in this case the loose and vernacular American form) without quite breaking it down, though he goes much farther than Coleridge did in his "Ancient Mariner." The story is of how Young Billie left Old Billie (and his old mother, too) behind in Kentucky, and went West to make his fortune on his own power (and his own reason) with scarcely a backward look. The Pottses, incidentally, are most unsympathetic characters; they are a nest of Kentucky rattlesnakes. But after ten years' success Young Billie has a sort of "conversion," and returns to the ancestral rooftree; where his parents promptly kill him; for one cannot return. It is true that they do not recognize him, but the accident is at least the symbol of the intention. To interpret all this in terms of his thesis Warren uses long parentheses, filled with his own matter and language, and that is a gloss far more implausible than that which Coleridge wrote upon his margins.

I suggest that this is not the best strategy of composition. And I would add something else, which for me is of paramount importance: I wish we had a way of holding this poet, whose verse is so beautiful when it is at his own height of expression, to a level no lower than this height.

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Strictly Personal . . .

AMERICA IS ON THE BEAM

FROM all I can gather from the signed confessions of some of the intellectuals of America, and particularly those intellectuals addicted to literature, they are convinced that they deserve the concentration camp and are crying for it. Some intellectuals and critics have been denouncing themselves or their fellows by claiming that by softening the American spirit they betrayed us in the peace. Now Philip Wylie takes his turn in this column to say that "intellectuo-liberals" have failed us in the war. I think the gentlemen are boasting. In fact, able gentlemen that they are, they sound to me in their lamentations like imaginative old maids recounting their errancies at a confession session on a Buchmanite week-end. I personally think the intellectuals are doing all right, but I somehow begin to suspect that their doings and failings are not quite the history of America or the central acting in the history of mankind.

Perhaps unintentionally, as a man deeply moved in the summer of the fall of France, even Archibald MacLeish, who has been doing a good deal more with his hands than wringing them since the war began, gave aid and comfort to the contention. As one who believes in the future, even if he sometimes is unduly melancholy about the present and the past, MacLeish in 1940 sternly described the manner in which American writers between wars had stripped the gleam from the words of glory. As Librarian of Congress, speaking from the largest intact pile of books in the world, he declared that he and other writers "must face the fact that the books they wrote in the years just after the war have done more to disarm democracy in the face of fascism than any other single influence."

I doubt it. At worst, I think the writers merely gave voice to the disillusionment they did not make. MacLeish set up as the primary corrupters of the militant spirit John Dos Passos with his "Three Soldiers" and Ernest Hemingway with "A Farewell to Arms." "Three Soldiers" came in the same year as the Disarmament Conference in which, in effect, we first gave the Japs the jump and which was an event in statesmanship not unrelated to the overwhelming vote of 1920 in which the American people said Phooey! to elaborate peace planning. According to the "World Almanac" the number of men in our regular Army got down to its lowest point between wars in 1925. That was four years before Hemingway, perhaps showing the literary influence of Congress, said farewell to the arms which most Americans had already left. Incidentally, Erich Maria Remarque published his "All Quiet" in 1929 in Germany where it was freely circulated in four strange formulative years. Incidentally also, according to "Who's Who," MacLeish did not even start disillusioning us with his dangling participles until 1924.

I have a suspicion that, consciously or unconsciously, MacLeish was on a war recruitment campaign for war-aroused writers when he gave them so much credit for disarming democracy. Properly goaded, they could arm it. But Mr. Wylie seems rather to relish his report of the failure of the liberal and literate intellectuals in the war.

Mr. Wylie says in this column that these gentlemen have failed in the task of telling America about the war it is fighting. They foresaw, he says, the war in advance of the hard-headed businessmen but they have failed because "their heads were full of twenty years of anti-war doctrine . . . all of these brave, decent gentlemen had been steeped in the melancholy literature which appeared after the last war." As a result, he thinks it is "a muddy, mixed-up war—of people who don't know enough, led by people who thought they knew everything."

Sonorous nonsense dies slowly. The writers didn't make the disillusionment of the peace recess. They reported it—and did a good job, too. They haven't, as "intellectuo-liberals" or "information specialists" on the Government payroll, failed to tell the people effectively about this war. Not all the credit may belong to the intellectuals, but by the slightest reference to his history books even an intellectual could discover that this is the most clear-eyed, least mentally muddy war we ever fought.

—*Globe Press Photo Service*
Jonathan Daniels

Did Mr. Wylie ever read any of G. Washington's own reports on the Revolution? Does he remember that the sense of democratic direction was so clear among the patriots that it was nine years after Cornwallis was defeated before Washington was inaugurated as the President of a nation most of whose representatives did not show up for the ceremony?

There was also that war in which Lincoln himself said that the Union people were "divided and partially paralyzed." Anthony Trollope got the same sentiments at the same time from a Washington citizen who told the English novelist, "We are splitting into pieces and of course that is gain to you. Take another cigar." It is probably beneficial to architecture, if not to history, that there is no sign on the Lincoln Memorial that Booth shot Lincoln just before the members of his own party in Congress got a chance to destroy him.

THE people are not informed? The people have not been told about this war? Their chief—and sometimes entirely legitimate—complaint has been the volume and complexity of the necessary telling. The miracle beside their complaint has been their understanding. Is anybody aware of the fact that all the housewives of America have learned the system of point rationing? Oh, yes, they learned with lamentation, indignation, political and personal fury. But they learned to collaborate with a set of reputedly deliberately idiotic bureaucrats to control prices as prices have never been controlled before—and despite the jangling of cow bells in their nation-wide school room by pressure groups which wished neither understanding nor control.

If such a spectacle impressed the "intellectuo-liberals" or any other kind of intellectuals as failure, I'm worried about the intellectuals, not America. Some of them are mistaking the American gripe for the American spirit, something which in their less articulate hearts the American people do not do. These intellectuals are also missing the only real present measure of America.

There has been no failure. America did not go to pieces between wars of its own volition or under the cajollery of its writers and intellectuals. There is no failure of the spirit in this war even if the high words and noble

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phrases of the last war are no more in fashion now than is the 1918 Buick. The distinctive thing about this war is that in terms of all the people it is the most effective and efficient war we ever fought. We are not going "over there" to borrow French guns to fight with. We are carrying our own arms and also sending arms to our allies. On the home front prices in wartime were never so well controlled before. There has been less damage to civil liberties than in any great war we ever fought. Americans as a whole are better fed today at home than ever before in time of peace or war. Our men are the best equipped soldiers not only in the world but in history. We as a people are the makers of the most amazing mobilization of force for a purpose in the annals of mankind.

The people are doing all right. The Americans in war have never been so well informed, armed, fed. America, including at least statistically its intellectuals, never did a better fighting job before. And despite the absence of elaborate oratory and elegant phrases, despite the grumbling which only sounds louder than the production, no Americans at war were ever so well prepared to make an intelligent peace.

What the hell are the writers or anybody else apologizing for?

JONATHAN DANIELS.

"Strictly Personal" next week will be conducted by Elmer Rice.

Treasure and Trouble to the South

MIDDLE AMERICA. By Charles Morrow Wilson. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. 1944. 317 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by CARLETON BEALS

THE myth of the limitless abundance of materials in the United States dies hard. Our productive capacities, so surpassing those of any other nation on earth, make us ignore the rapid depletion of much soil and mineral wealth and our lack of many strategic materials.

For many years our War Department concerned itself seriously with the problem of strategic materials, but could find no political backing for its program, partly because of American capital tie-ups with British capital in the Near and Far East, India, Africa, and elsewhere. Although every great Power on earth has had a strategic materials policy, in many instances for generations, it was not until 1939 that our Congress begrudgingly authorized the Treasury Department to lay in $100,000,000 worth of such materials at the rate of $10,000,000 a year. Laughable now.

It is also significant that in the first year's purchase rubber was absent, as were most key materials coming from the East Indies area. General Hugh S. Johnson, discussing the July, 1940 report of the National Defense Advisory Commission, stated, "The weakest and most inexcusable position of this administration has been its insistence that our interests are unavoidably involved in the East Indies because we are wholly dependent on them for rubber and tin." Not until that late date did President Roosevelt, according to Mr. Stettinius, suggest a *study* of the problem.

In the present volume, Charles Morrow Wilson drives home the fact that with proper foresight we would now be obtaining at our very doorstep an abundance of the strategic materials cut off in the Far East, and this with benefit to ourselves and to our neighbors both in war and in peace. Since many of the master political minds now arranging our destinies in star-chamber fashion, with a secrecy they call democratic, still seem imbued with the idea that it is better for us to develop and secure such materials in the most distant and least defensible areas of the globe, Wilson's book should be required reading for just about everybody. No precaution is ever too great for national security, and national security should never be left merely to a grandiose gamble of international economic imperialism.

Mr. Wilson's long connection with the United Fruit Company, his lifelong study of agriculture, his first-hand residence in Middle America and the Caribbean, make his book—like everything he has written—factually dependable and absolutely authoritative. In addition, Mr. Wilson is a vivid writer with a keen sensitivity to land and sky, people and animals, fields and plants. In this book he does not produce so many long tons of quinine a year, but rather human beings grow, cultivate, and harvest quinine.

Among Wilson's basic contentions is that the United States can never find any market of importance or achieve any enduring friendship if Middle America is to be a tropical slum. But, with even the minimum of intelligent concern about obtaining strategic materials nearer at hand, we could create enormous productive power and prosperity in our neighboring countries. One sixtieth of our rubber requirements secured from Haiti would automatically double the export trade of that country. Competition from the slum areas of the British Empire, he asserts, can be offset in the American tropics, by greater technical efficiency and better organization, so that human beings will be able to enjoy a decent standard of living.

Some matters Mr. Wilson avoids discussing. He does not take up the question of absentee foreign capital, its benefits and disadvantages; its dual role of increasing natives wages and employment while draining out sums that perhaps should be reinvested in the given country; he does not consider the possibilities of economic nationalism; he does not, except on the health end, and briefly, discuss the elaborate loans and promotions by our Government outside our borders and the resultant political implications with respect either to the future of the good-neighbor policy or the ultimate fate of American private capital expansion.

In his lists of nations belonging to Middle America, he leaves out Puerto Rico and Jamaica entirely, and the former is not discussed. Previous conquests and annexations do not make those countries any less part of the region, and their problems cannot be isolated from the workings of any good-neighbor policy. Finally, he does not discuss the possibilities of synthetic substitutes or equivalents. How much of our rubber needs will be supplied eventually by natural *hule?* How much by synthetic? To promote new industries in Middle America might result in great losses, even economic disaster.

But, within the scope selected by Mr. Wilson for his discussion, he has produced a volume of extreme importance, both for its vast store of intimate knowledge and for its highly intelligent point of view. No book thus far written on the resources of the region can take its place.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 529)

LT. JOHN MASON BROWN:
TO ALL HANDS

The melancholy job of a ship's censor is to read other people's letters. . . . He is undone by duty rather than desire. Betsy Ross turns him into a snooper, a scanner of secrets, an inkwell eavesdropper, a peruser of cherished intimacies.

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The following editorial was on the press when a telephone call from the Post Office notified the editors that the postal order to which the editorial refers had been temporarily rescinded, and that we were to proceed on our own responsibility pending a further study by the postal authorities. The editorial is published nevertheless, both as the record of a correspondence that may be of interest to our readers, and for whatever value it may have in a "temporary" situation.

THE N. Y. POST OFFICE AND THE *SRL*

THE Saturday Review of Literature has received the following communication from the United States Post Office, New York:

May 12, 1944

Publishers of
The Saturday Review of Literature,
25 West 45th Street,
New York 19, N. Y.

Gentlemen:

As the May 13, 1944 issue of your publication contains an advertisement on page 21 of the book entitled "Strange Fruit," by Lillian Smith, of Reynal & Hitchcock, New York, you are informed that this book is nonmailable under Section 598, Postal Regulations, 1940, and, therefore, no advertisements thereof should be published in copies of your publication mailed hereafter.

Will you kindly acknowledge the receipt of this letter stating your intention in this respect.

Sincerely yours,

ALBERT GOLDMAN, *Postmaster.*

The following reply has been sent Albert Goldman, Postmaster, United States Post Office, New York:

May 15, 1944

Dear Mr. Goldman:

We acknowledge your letter of May 12, notifying us that we are not to accept advertisements of "Strange Fruit," by Lillian Smith, under penalty of exclusion from the mails. To come to the point at once concerning our intention in this respect, we feel obliged and privileged to state that it is our intention to continue running advertising of "Strange Fruit" should the publishers request space. In the event the publishers do not request space, we will seek their permission to publish such advertising without charge to them. We intend to run an editor's note below the advertisement, informing our readers that it is published contrary to an order from the postal authorities. If our 40,000 subscription readers are prevented from receiving that issue because it is barred from the mails, we intend to send them a postal card explaining why.

If it seems puzzling to you that we should thus jeopardize the career of a magazine which has been publishing since 1924, and which now enjoys the largest readership in its history, may I tell you something about *The Saturday Review* so that you may understand how our action in this matter represents an almost automatic decision; indeed, how it would be impossible for us to comply with your order.

The Saturday Review began as an independent publishing entity twenty years ago, striking out on its own after a long period as the *Literary Review* of the *New York Evening Post.* The central idea behind the venture was to publish a journal of ideas built around books, to encourage free expression and intelligent criticism; in short, to work for a healthy climate of opinion and intellectual activity. This sounds pretty top-lofty and inflated, I know, but please believe me when I say that the people who founded this magazine and who are still with it are completely and stubbornly taken with the idea that the magazine cannot under any circumstances trim its sails on any account, let alone because of the whim or prejudice of an official in the Post Office.

When I say "whim" or "prejudice" I mean exactly that. Have any charges been brought against "Strange Fruit" that the author and publishers have had opportunity to answer? Have any hearings of *any* nature been held? Who decides the mailability or non-mailability of books or magazines or newspapers or private correspondence? On what basis? On the basis of "nasty" words? On the basis of "filthy" or "indecent" situations? We notice in Section 598 of the Postal Laws and Regulations that the ruling against "indecent" material is not limited to books, magazines, and newspapers, but extends to private letters as well. To facilitate a test ruling of the applicability of your regulation in this respect, we are sending you, in an accompanying envelope, a letter I have written to a friend praising "Strange Fruit." The letter is sealed. Please notify me if the Post Office, with a knowledge of its contents, now proposes to censor or withhold my letter on the same grounds that it has taken against advertising of "Strange Fruit." Please inform me, too, whether the Post Office proposes to open and inspect all private correspondence where there is a suspicion that "indecent"

Desert Oriole

By Bridget Dryden

DO you remember, dear, that bird who sang,
a hooded oriole in the agave brush
by an abandoned quarry rank with lush
and salty scrub? The road construction gang
had flung their bottles and hung illumination
of ruby lanterns in a warning row
across the Coyote Canyon. A disobeyed Dead Slow
glared in the twilight . . . pause and hestitation . . .
the swelling velvet-throat sang on, How sweet!
like joy forbidden, a steep alternative
they could not bar for us, those phantom feet
of dead prospectors—Go, pound up, old flivv,
up to that indigo slash of sky, our goal,
obeying, not Dead Slow but the oriole.

And they who've never whiffed a pungent blue-gray bush
by Fawnskin quarry have never in the hush
of gray-blue mountains heard a seven-inch oriole
salute the sunset like a Christian soul
who glories in the triumph of creation.

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or "filthy" situations may be described —again using your own definitionless definition of "indecent" or "filthy."

Censorship is no trivial matter, Mr. Postmaster. So far as Americans are concerned, it involves their very traditions. Who in the Post Office is charged with the responsibility for seeing that these traditions are not easily and ignorantly brushed aside? We ask this question because this morning, when we phoned your office to discuss your letter with you, we were told by your "first assistant" that you yourself, though your name was signed to the letter, did not see it and had no reason for seeing it; that this was just a *routine* matter handled by someone in the classification section; that we were making a fuss about a small matter ("All right," your assistant said, "so you say this is very important to you. Well, mister, it's only a small detail to us"). Later, we did manage to get through to you directly, and, in all fairness, we want to acknowledge that your own attitude was courteous and lacking in the offhand manner of your assistant.

But the point, Mr. Goldman, is that censorship and suppression are *not* a matter of detail to be handled cavalierly by underlings. If it is, and if that represents a true view of the conception postal officials have of the rights and responsibilities of free speech and free press, then perhaps some open acknowledgment ought to be made of that fact.

For the information of the Post Office, we have available a list of 475 books, including the Bible and "Mother Goose," which carry words and allusions which we suppose your classification officers, with their eye for small detail, could condemn as obscene—applying "Strange Fruit" as a yardstick. May we send you this list for a ruling on each book? If this sounds like the *reductio ad absurdum,* it is certainly no more than what the Post Office itself bargained for in appropriating a magic wand of censorship to wave where and how it pleases.

To sum up: We not only protest your order; we refuse to follow it without due process of law. If, after a properly constituted hearing or trial, it is decided that "Strange Fruit" is "obscene," we will of course abide by the decision of the court. Until that time, we hope our readers will not blame us for seeing it through.

Sincerely yours,

NORMAN COUSINS,
The Saturday Review of Literature.

P.S. So that our readers may know at first hand Section 598 of the Postal Laws and Regulations, we are publishing a transcript of the aforesaid Section on our editorial page.

THE DEATH OF "Q."

"Q" WAS Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, native of Cornwall, compiler of one of the most famous anthologies of English poetry, "The Oxford Book of English Verse"; novelist of "The Splendid Spur," which contained an immortal poem; and of many other works of prose (fiction and essays) and of poetry. Other Oxford Books he compiled were one of English Ballads, upon which form he was an authority; one of Victorian Verse; and one of English Prose. He was always unpedantic, and I have said elsewhere of his unexcelled parodies—another string to his bow—that "only a genuine poet whose ear was attentively attuned to the most delicate effects of cadence could have produced them." His serious poetry was both moving and effective. He died last week at the ripe age of eighty at Fowey in Cornwall. He was King Edward professor of English literature at Cambridge University. He always combatted jargon and cant. In 1939, in his Preface to New Edition of the "Oxford Book" he said, "I am at a loss what to do with a fashion of morose disparagement; of sneering at things long by catholic consent accounted beautiful; of scorning at 'Man's unconquerable mind' and hanging up (without benefit of laundry) our common humanity as a rag on a clothesline." He liked the "note of valiancy" and "the old Roman 'virtue' mated with cheerfulness." Indeed, these are things not to be despised. The end of the war may bring us to a new reliance upon them.

Had I space, I should like to quote entire "Q"'s inimitable parody, "A New Ballad of Sir Patrick Spens," in which he becomes a proper successor to Lewis Carroll in the use of mathematical terms; or "The Famous Ballad of the Jubilee Cup."

But so long as there is youth in the world and the spirit of adventure, the three doughty stanzas of "The Splendid Spur" will live in memory. Therefore I quote here the last verse of that poet's poem, as "Q"'s fitting epitaph:

Trust in thyself,—then spur amain!
So shall Charybdis wear a grace,
Grim Aetna laugh, the Libyan plain
Take roses to her shrivelled face.
This orb—this round
Of sight and sound—
Count it the lists that God hath built
For haughty hearts to ride a-tilt.

W. R. B.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Following is the text of Section 598 of the Postal Laws and Regulations, to which the United States Post Office, New York, referred in its letter notifying* The Saturday Review *that any issue of the magazine containing advertising of "Strange Fruit" would be non-mailable.*

EVERY obscene, lewd, or lascivious, and every filthy book, pamphlet, picture, paper, letter, writing, print, or other publication of an indecent character, and every article or thing designed, adapted, or intended for preventing conception or producing abortion, or for any indecent or immoral use; and every article, instrument, substance, drug, medicine, or thing which is advertised or described in a manner calculated to lead another to use or apply it for preventing conception or producing abortion, or for any indecent or immoral purpose; and every written or printed card, letter, circular, book, pamphlet, advertisement, or notice of any kind giving information, directly or indirectly, where, or how, or from whom, or by what means any of the hereinbefore-mentioned matters, articles, or things may be obtained or made, or where or by whom any act or operation of any kind for the procuring or producing of abortion will be done or performed, or how or by what means conception may be prevented or abortion produced, whether sealed or unsealed; and every letter, packet, or package, or other mail matter containing any filthy, vile, or indecent thing, device, or substance; and every paper, writing, advertising, or representation that any article, instrument, substance, drug, medicine, or thing may, or can be, used or applied for preventing conception or producing abortion, or for any indecent or immoral purpose; and every description calculated to induce or incite a person to so use or apply any such article, instrument, substance, drug, medicine, or thing, is hereby declared to be nonmailable matter and shall not be conveyed in the mails or delivered from any post office or by any letter carrier. Whoever shall knowingly deposit, or cause to be deposited for mailing or delivery, anything declared by this section to be nonmailable, or shall knowingly take, or cause the same to be taken, from the mails for the purpose of circulating or disposing thereof, or of aiding in the circulation or disposition thereof, shall be fined not more than five thousand dollars, or imprisoned not more than five years, or both.

2. And the term "indecent" within the intendment of this section shall include matter of a character tending to incite arson, murder, or assassination.

3. Any person who knowingly and willfully deposits or causes to be deposited for conveyance in the mail or for delivery from any post office or by any letter carrier any letter, paper, writing, print, missive, or document containing any threat to take the life of or to inflict bodily harm upon the President of the United States, or who knowingly and willfully otherwise makes any such threat against the President, shall upon conviction be fined not exceeding $1,000 or imprisoned not exceeding five years, or both.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Over- and Under-Praise

SIR: I am deeply shocked by Mr. Horace Gregory's review entitled "Mark Van Doren and Stanley Kunitz." Granted Mr. Van Doren has been overpraised—it is conceivable that a fellow-poet might set out to take him down a bit. But Mr. Kunitz has been underpraised—an opportunity for the critic to be just and discriminating. Rather the critic's words are of the sly plausible variety, enough to put a tag on Mr. Kunitz. I object to this sneering and smiling manner. I object as much for Mr. Van Doren as for Mr. Kunitz, although I do not admire Mr. Van Doren's verse.

Let us turn to Mr. Gregory's verse and his "critical essays." I have been through them carefully. They wander off on many weak points and fail to follow strong ones (form, coherence?). They sound profound; but they are empty. They fail to say anything much. I could never find anything worth keeping in his book on Lawrence. The essays are more pretentious but are neither sound, astringent, well-built, nor learned. A dreadful self-importance makes them embarrassing. Paul Elmer More, my eye! And Yeats—good gracious! And what of The Child, and Alice, and William Wordsworth! After great patience one concludes that Mr. Gregory is playing Critic.

And finally, Mr. Gregory's poetry, at best only pretty good, has become in recent years either hysterical (with effects) or (again) empty, plaster-cast-like, hollow. This applied to the poem you published. Full of effects but not good.

Mr. Gregory is praised on all sides; he rarely praises. I think we should be both sober and kind in these illuminated days. Mr. Gregory is no longer a critic for me or for my literary friends. His early poems were full of interest. Will writers stop making careers and try some of the virtues of responsible people?

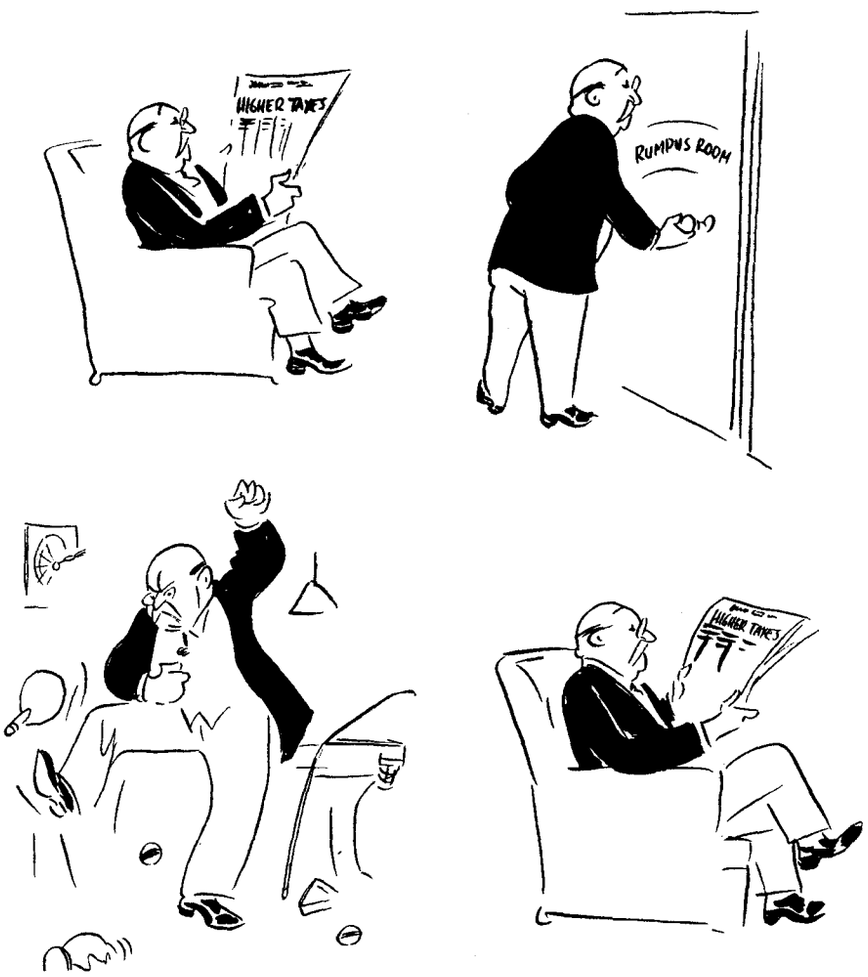
DISTURBED READER.

New York City.

"What's Wrong with Scholars?"

SIR: Permit me, as a friend and admirer of Professor Marjorie H. Nicolson and a fellow-laborer in her vineyard, to question one of the theses of her almost wholly admirable article on "What's Wrong with Scholars?" [*SRL*, April 15].

My argument begins with her distinction between books and theses, according to which the word thesis is unjustly condemned because of its association with poorly written, inadequately composed doctoral dissertations. For all books, and especially those written by scholars, have within them a thesis more or less explicitly propounded. Should a book be called a thesis because it is poorly written—or a thesis a book, because it is well written? Or is a book called a thesis when its central purpose is very obviously the logical exposition of a thesis? Or is the distinction simply a matter of usage: a scholar writes a thesis for his doctorate and after that just writes books?



For example, is Bernard DeVoto's "The Literary Fallacy" a book simply because he is not a candidate for the doctor's degree? Or because of the "brilliance of his phraseology?" Or (could it be?) because his thesis does not strike many reviewers as logically persuasive? The book certainly contains a thesis. Could our scientific minds be right in believing that its brilliant style dazzles the eyes to the point of impairing critical perception? Could its lack of cogency be attributed, then, to a lack of scientific method? We are here at the heart of the problem.

Miss Nicolson believes that, applied to literary scholarship, no such animal as the scientific method exists. Probably our definitions differ, for the scientific method is, to me, and has been since Bacon, more than the discovery of facts. Many of us have thought of Miss Nicolson as one of the leading exponents of that method applied to literary research. She seeks out, marshals, and controls her facts, from which, with a remarkably acute perception of relationships, she elaborates her hypothesis (I dare not say thesis), and this in turn she cogently urges upon the willing reader in beautifully clear logical discourse. (The scientist would call this final step "public verifiability.") Her writing is enriched, as one could expect from a teacher of English literature, with metaphor, symbol, and allusion. The structure is logical, the texture is "poetic." Following her example, we could hope for more enrichment, more texture in works of a scholarly nature, but we can hardly ask for less structure or logical persuasion. Poorly written theses or books, in my experience, offend more often because of faulty structure and illogical obscurities than because of the lack of poetic enrichment, which is the apanage of age or experience when it is not a special quality of a creative mind. But the denial or even neglect of scientific procedures, it seems to me, would constitute "the fallacy of literary scholarship."

French state doctoral theses, very often well composed and well written, are honorable achievements. They are announced and published as theses and carry a consideration that is not always accorded to mere books. Our

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job, then, should be to bring the American theses back into repute. To this end Professor Nicolson's remarks are pertinent indeed.

NORMAN L. JORREY.
Columbia University

SIR: Those who have read with appreciation Marjorie Nicolson's "What's Wrong with Scholars?" may be interested in a letter I received. I had written a dozen typewritten pages not with the idea that any sane editor whose publication was addressed to the general public would give my article more than perfunctory attention, but solely to increase the knowledge of truth by pointing out certain facts which had not fallen within the purview of specialists in the field to which they were relevant. I sent my screed to a periodical which was read by those whom I desired to address, and received a kindly and courteous letter of rejection, most of which I here copy without other change than to cancel the name of the periodical, and without other comment than is implied in the fact that the article "What's Wrong with Scholars?" made me think of it.

> Unfortunately, in spite of its value, the paper is of a type differing from what we publish. I suspect that you are not familiar with the nature of this Journal.
>
> Our Journal is published by a society of scholars for scholars; your paper, though it embodies the results of scholarly research, is not in the *form* of a scholarly contribution. Alas and alack! Scholars have peculiar idiosyncrasies and insist on certain peculiarities in papers printed in scholarly journals. Here are some: 1. Full reference to the sources by chapter and verse. 2. Historical criticism of the sources of information. 3. Bibliographical references to previous publications on the subject. 4. Discussion of rival theories.
>
> Your paper, though very informing and fundamentally accurate, does not meet these specifications. It is more in the form of an essay than of a piece of research. It is well written, well arranged, solid, convincing (on the whole), and gives an excellent summary of our information on the subject. But it is devoid of scholarly paraphernalia. It deserves to be published (with minor revisions), but in a journal which is not as technical as the . . . Personally, I enjoy more a paper like yours than a technical one; but in my work as a scholar I need exact references, bibliographies, etc. . . .
>
> I really would like to accept your paper, but my hands are tied by the character of the Journal I am editing. I hope, however, that you will print your paper elsewhere.

Yet I am not utterly without the spirit of scholarship even in its more objectionable forms. For surely it is the spirit of piddling scholarship, rather than that of generous literature, that makes me in reading "What's Wrong" wonder why it seems to the National President of Phi Beta Kappa that the words preceding "Still there's the comment" are "mastered learning's dry hand" and not "mastered learning's crabbed text."

STEVEN T. BYINGTON.
Ballard Vale, Mass.

Mairzie Dake Dotice

SIR: The reading of your recent lines

"in mud eels are" etc.,

suddenly bridged a gap in my boyhood of over forty years ago. I hadn't seen, heard, or even thought of the lines in the interim; and then that reminds me of another along the same general line which, if repeated rapidly, has the same effect—

"Mares eat oats and does eat oats
And little lambs eat ivy
A kid will eat ivy too
Wouldn't you?"

WILSON W. MILLS.
Detroit, Mich.

The "Little Willie" Offshoots

SIR: Its all been nice and fine about your cold-blooded, white-haired little Willie, but what about those others like Sam and Susan and Mary and James?

Look:

Sam had spirits naught could check,
And today, at breakfast, he
Broke his baby sister's neck
So he shan't have jam for tea.

Or:

Making toast at the fireside,
Nurse fell in the grate and died;
And, what makes it even worse,
All the toast was burned with Nurse.

Or:

In the drinking well
(which the plumber built her)
Aunt Eliza fell,—
We must buy a filter.

(These three were written by one Col. D. Streamer and published in a number called "Ruthless Rhymes for Heartless Homes" in 1901.)

Mr. Dash Anonymous does for the rest of them:

Susan poisoned grandmother's tea;
Grandmother died in agonee.
Susan's papa was greatly vexed
And he said to Susan, "My dear, what next?"

And,

Baby sat on the window seat,
Mary pushed Baby into the street;
Baby's brains were dashed out in the "arey,"
And Mother held up her forefinger at Mary.

And,

Pity now poor Mary Ames,
Blinded by her brother, James;
Red-hot nails in her eyes he poked,—
I never saw Mary more provoked.

There was one little Willie I think you overlooked, that went:

Little Willie hung his sister,
She was dead before we missed her.
"Willie's always up to tricks!
Ain't he cute? He's only six!"

But nevertheless, Little Willie, indeed!

RUTH CAMERON.
New York City

SIR:

Little Willie in the best of sashes
Fell in the fire and was burned to ashes.
After a while the room grew chilly
But no one cared to stir up Willie.

Willie fell down the elevator
Wasn't freed till three weeks later.
Then the neighbors said "gee whiz
What a spoiled boy Willie is."

SARA FULLARTON.
New York City.

—*Reprinted from SRL, 1934.*

"Take a bit of Huxley, and some of Shaw, with just a dash of Rabelais, and you have me."

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Endurable Fragments in France

FAIR STOOD THE WIND FOR FRANCE. By H. E. Bates. Boston: Little Brown & Co. An Atlantic Monthly Press Book. 1944. 270 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by BEN RAY REDMAN

SEVERAL years ago, on a motion picture lot, a writer rushed up to an executive and said: "Got a great idea for an opening for a murder mystery. Body's found on the railroad tracks, cut in two. Great detective's called in, and first thing he finds is that lower half of body is that of a boy of seventeen, while upper half is that of a man of seventy. —You take it from there."

Mr. Bates's novel exhibits no division as neat or remarkable as the one suggested by the Hollywood humorist, but it is definitely not of a piece. Readable and absorbing as it all is, part of it is readable as writing that aspires to be literature, and succeeds, while the remainder of it is readable as fiction of the now popular escape-from-German-occupied-territory school. One can have no quarrel with the author's choice of subject, or with his handling of it through the better part of his narrative; it is only when he slips from sincerely thoughtful writing into an overworked and somewhat slovenly pattern that one suffers disappointment and is moved to protest. After which one reads on, still pulled by the tow of the yarn, but on a different level. Fortunately, however—and let it be emphasized—the change occurs late.

"Fair Stood the Wind for France" is the story of John Franklin, R. A. F. bomber pilot and captain of a Wellington crew. We meet him in the third summer of the war when he is flying back across the Alps after completing a mission to northern Italy. Behind him is almost a year of active operations, beginning with Bremen and Cologne; and of his crew of four sergeants, three have been with him all this time. Behind him is fear, that he has learned to screen even from himself. Behind him is the learned "habit of foreshortening the focus of his mind: so that he never looks forward beyond the next moment of darkness." He has learned "never to anticipate the flak, the searchlights, the exciting terror of the target, the journey home," and in this way "the hell has been broken up into endurable fragments." Behind him, between operations, is a lot of drinking and a lot of dancing and love-making, all calculated to hold back "tides of apprehension and pain"; behind him, "screaming nights in the local towns, crashing traffic lights, with girls screaming in the back of the car, everyone having a wizard time. Wizard: the word has grown crusts on it. What fun!" John Franklin, at the age of twenty-two, thinks that he has a sizable chunk of life behind him. He does not know that a broken airscrew, a crash landing in Occupied France, a severed artery in his left arm, and the beginning of a new and more meaningful life lie just a few minutes ahead.

H. E. Bates

In the new life an arm is lost and a girl is found, and long steps are taken towards John Franklin's maturity. In the French farmhouse where he finds refuge, among the people who succor him, he comes to see war and power, and life and death, as he has not seen them before. ("Franklin looked at the revolver and saw it suddenly as a pathetic and useless thing. He saw his own belief in it as pathetic. He had become so used to handling a weapon as big as a house, and carrying enough power to wipe out a small town, that he had forgotten there are other sorts of power. He looked at the three people sitting in the lamplight waiting for a sound. He saw them, the three generations of one nation, as part of a defenseless people, as part of the little people possessing an immeasurable power that could not be broken. He saw them suddenly as little people who had lain on the ground and had their faces trampled on but whose power was still unbroken. He knew it clearly now as a more wonderful, more enduring, and more inspiring power than he had ever believed possible: the power of their own hearts.")

Mr. Bates tells the story simply, but with little or none of the pretentious "simplicity" paraded by writers who follow Hemingway at too great a distance. He is particularly skilful in the communication of physical sensations—indeed, he is body-conscious to a remarkable degree—and the sensitive reader will often feel a probe go home. He is skilful, too, in the creation of suspense, and in the precise, measured, slow-motion writing that can increase almost to the breaking-point the tension of a dramatic scene. John Franklin, in the story's telling, grows from a mere name into a character of considerable substance; while the other airmen matter not at all, with the exception of O'Connor who, to my mind, serves the novel ill rather than well. Françoise, the girl, does not grow, because she is complete to begin with—strong, true, loving, tender, capable, courageous. If any captious critic objects that such a character is a mere dream-girl, let him take a look at some of literature's most successful heroines.

As to the pattern of the story, it is enough to have suggested its nature without reducing it to a synopsis that might rob some readers of the pleasures of discovery and surprise. It is often a deeply moving story, always an exciting one. And the reading public may rest assured that whatever Mr. Bates has to say about war flying is the "pukka gen." For this is the same H. E. Bates whose "There's Something in the Air" was reviewed in these pages about a year ago; the same H. E. Bates who was commissioned "Flying Officer X" by the British Government, in the summer of 1941, and given the run of the Bomber Command so that he might study the men of the Royal Air Force in the air and on the ground.

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT: No. 48

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. The solution to Crypt No. 48 will be found in the next issue.

QDHBPBLAC ELFG IJK BQQ-MGNBAGM, LC OLKBDALQ, KEG EJRLA SBAM; OGLCDA, KEGT CLT, IGQDAHC KD RLA; IJK QGK KEGR XODFG BK BN KEGT PLA.

—VDALKELA CZBNK.

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 47

THE KATYDID WORKS HER CHROMATIC REED ON THE WALNUT-TREE OVER THE WELL.

—WALT WHITMAN.
—SONG OF MYSELF.

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For older and younger

Awarded the

John Newbery Medal

for "the most distinguished contribution to American literature for children" in 1943.

Johnny Tremain

BY ESTHER FORBES

In her first book for young people, Esther Forbes has created in Johnny Tremain a character who seems destined to join those boyish heroes of Dickens and Twain as a children's classic.

"The most distinguished novel for the teen age . . . we have had in years." — *Ellen Lewis Buell, New York Times*

$2.50

Awarded the **Caldecott Medal** for 1942

The Little House

BY VIRGINIA LEE BURTON

The most charming house in children's literature. A picture book that will forever remain a winner.

"There is something fortifying" for boys and girls "in the lasting qualities of the Little House and the steady round of the turning year." *The New York Times*

$2.00

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TRADE Winds

IN THE COURSE of compiling circulation figures on the Chicago newspapers for last week's Trade Winds, I thought it might be interesting to find the dozen papers with the biggest daily circulation in the entire country. Here they are, according to the latest figures available (late 1943), prepared by the N. W. Ayer Company:

1.	*New York News*	2,000,999
2.	*Chicago Tribune*	940,751
3.	*New York Mirror*	770,340
4.	*N. Y. Journal American*	641,194
5.	*Philadelphia Bulletin*	639,110
6.	*Philadelphia Inquirer*	477,754
7.	*Chicago Herald-American*	471,866
8.	*New York Times*	419,447
9.	*Chicago News*	412,148
10.	*Chicago Times*	399,054
11.	*Boston Post*	396,804
12.	*N. Y. World Telegram*	389,256

Some other figures that will interest the book world: the *New York Herald-Tribune,* 296,197; *The San Francisco Chronicle,* 118,830; *The Detroit News,* 387,757; *The Kansas City Star,* 337,955; *The Washington Post,* 161,910; *The Los Angeles Times,* 245,375; *The Cleveland News,* 122,948.

The Sunday edition of *The New York News* has hit the incredible figure of 3,893,395. *The New York Mirror* is a distant second with 1,673,528. Then, in order, come *The Philadelphia Inquirer,* the *Chicago Tribune, The New York Journal-American, The Chicago Herald-America, The New York Times, The Los Angeles Examiner, The Boston Advertiser,* the *New York Herald-Tribune,* and *The Detroit Times.*

SUDDENLY INSATIABLE for statistics, I next began to wonder what department stores led the nation in annual sales. *The Department Store Economist,* which ought to know, supplied the following round figures for 1943.

Macy's, New York, is in the lead with a total of $165,000,000. That includes the New York stores (about $100,000,000); Bamberger's in Newark; Davison-Paxon in Atlanta, and LaSalle Koch in Toledo.

The Gimbel-Saks Chain (nine stores) is just behind with $164,000,000.

The May Company is third with $151,000,000. That total includes five stores: The May Company in Cleveland, Los Angeles, and Baltimore; Famous-Barr in St. Louis, and O'Neill's in Akron.

Marshall Field is fourth with $122,000,000, representing sales in the Chicago stores and the Frederick-Nelson Company in Seattle.

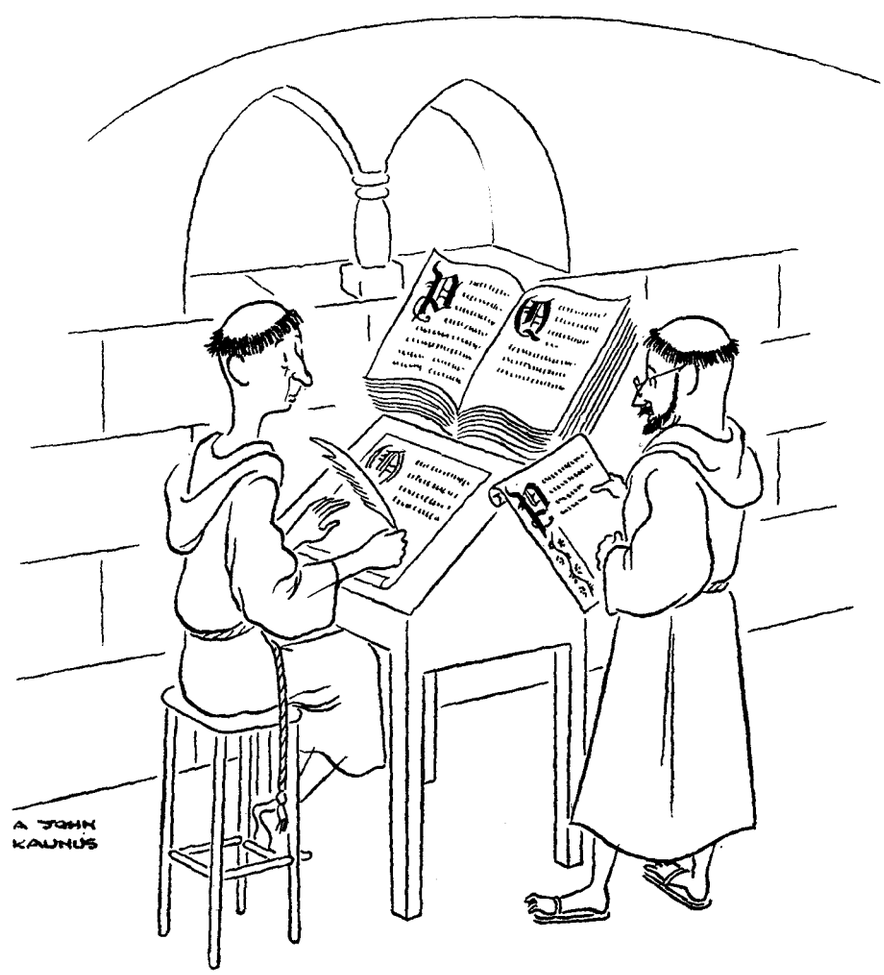
J. L. Hudson of Detroit is fifth with $65,000,000.

Goldblatt's eleven stores rank sixth with $60,000,000.

Filene's of Boston is seventh with $46,000,000; Bullock's of Los Angeles eighth with $45,000,000; The Emporium of San Francisco ninth with $43,000,000; Bamberger's of Newark tenth with $40,000,000 (see Macy totals); the Dayton Company of Minneapolis eleventh with $37,000,000; Kaufman's in Pittsburgh twelfth with $35,000,000.

Every one of the country's twelve leading retail outlets except Filene's has a first-rate book department which, if it does not contribute as much as some other departments to the general volume, certainly adds tone and éclat to the institution. I once met a director of Filene's at dinner. "Have you any idea," I said severely, "how many customers you have lost to Jordan Marsh because of your stubborn refusal to install a book department?" "I forgot to tell you," he assured me pleasantly. "I'm a director of Jordan Marsh too!"....

HELEN MacINNES, in "While We Yet Live," is authority for the statement that, as far back as the days of the Caesars, Roman soldiers who didn't speak proper Latin referred to a girl's legs as *gamba.* I wonder how the expression "cheesecake" came to denote photographs of those lovely things? . . . Isabel de Palencia has signed with Longmans, Green for a biography of Alexandra Kollontay, the remarkable Russian ambassadress to Sweden, and the first woman to become Dean of the Diplomatic Corps of the country to which she is accredited. . . . Mel Heimer, whose "Arpad" weather reports for the *New York World-Telegram* put genuine humor into a field where it seemed absolutely impossible, is doing a book for Whittlesey House that he threatens to call "The World Ends in Hoboken." . . . Mrs. A. A. Milne writes that Christopher Robin is now in Italy, fighting in the vicinity of the Gariglonia River. That intelligence, coupled with the celebration of Shirley Temple's sixteenth birthday, sent



"Brother Sebastian, you'll have to watch your P's and Q's!"

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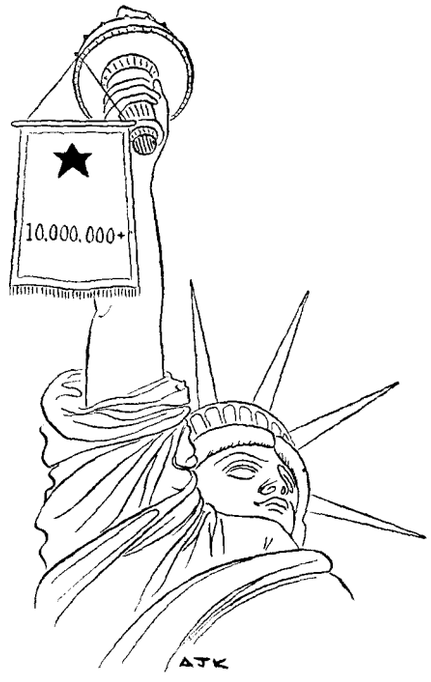
me searching madly for a wheel chair and a tin cup. . . . The story of the Allied gunners who fired by mistake on our own transports last fall must have come as no surprise to people who had read carefully John Mason Brown's "To All Hands." . . . Putnam's will publish Frederick Collins's "Manhattan Toe," the story of New York from Canal Street down to the Battery. . . . Little, Brown haven't sold a selection to the Book-of-the-Month Club all week. . . .

THE PUBLISHERS' WEEKLY solemnly reports that Leland Stowe's "They Shall Not Sleep" is outselling every other title at the Wide Awake Book Shop. . . . And you should see the way "Moby Dick" is moving at the Whalen' Drug Stores. . . . Peter Lind Hayes is writing the biography of a Hollywood notable. "I didn't intend it to be offensive," he reports. "It just turned out that way." . . . The *SRL's* Jack Cominsky thinks the overlong "The Song of Bernadette" should be renamed "The Lost Weekend." . . . An old opera singer visited Kroch's Book Store to inspect a newly-published encyclopedia of musical data. "If my name's in it," she announced, "I'll buy a copy." Mr. Kroch found the write-up himself—a half column summary. She was just about to complete the purchase when she spotted the last line: "Madam Blank died in 1936." . . . There is one item in the forthcoming Woollcott Letters that belongs in the raised-eyebrow department. The foreman of a Connecticut newspaper's composing room up and eloped one day. Mr. W. sent him a one-word telegram: "Stet." . . . . Ernest Hemingway, new beard and all, is off to cover the European war front for *Collier's*. . . . Robert Benchley says the report that he had quit writing for good was studio publicity hooey. A sign in his room reminds visitors "MISTER Benchley please." . . .

THE THEATRE GUILD, celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary, has reached a new height of prosperity, but its once-promising off-shoot, the Group Theatre, is just a memory. . . . The Group once received a play script whose opening curtain rose on a little old French lady knitting in her rocker. Her husband entered, visibly fatigued, and placed his black instrument bag on the table. "Ah Pierre," said the lady, "You have been away all night. Was it a difficult accouchement?" "Yes," answered the weary doctor. "But it was worth it. History was made last night! The baby's name was—Victor Hugo." The author wasn't able to keep up that pace for long. . . . Another script began with these lines: "Time of Act One: 7000 years ago. Act two: one day later." . . . The Guild just missed getting in on Norman Bel Geddes's production of "The Eternal Road," thereby assuring the late Otto Kahn and his associates the privilege of losing about a quarter of a million dollars on the venture. The economical Geddes remodeled the entire Manhattan Opera House for the production, and blasted away a ton of solid rock to deepen the stage. One blast blew a leak in a water main, and a geyser of water shot up to drench everybody in the theatre. Kahn, seated in the balcony, let out a cry of triumph. "The tide has turned," he rejoiced. "Geddes has struck oil." . . .

ERIC AMBLER'S "A Coffin for Dimitrios" is now available in a Tower forty-nine cent edition; the name of the saloon proprietor in Margaret Curtis's "A Highland Fling" is Hamish Hamilton, and Oxford has signed a contract with Viscount Halifax for a volume of his American speeches. . . . Norton has just published a useful tome called "Middle America," by Charles Morrow Wilson—a comprehensive survey of Mexico, Cuba, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and the six nations of Central America. Oh, all right, they're Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Guatemala, and El Salvador. . . . A Seattle book buyer came to New York to inspect the publishers' summer lists. He was scheduled to stay just seven days, but one thing led to another, and he wired his wife that he would be detained for a second week. Then, what with the races and stuff, he wired her again: "Third week here imperative. Love." That brought an answer, collect: "Come home at once, sweetheart, before I start selling what I think you're buying."

BENNETT CERF.



THIS IS TOM O'REILLY, the sports writer who went down to the sea with clips and carbons as purser aboard the *S.S. Mulligan Stew*. What sets the *Mulligan Stew* apart from other merchant ships is its purser, O'Reilly, and what sets O'Reilly apart from other pursers is that he has written an uproarious *two years before the mast*, 1944 style.

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The Lowest Ceiling in the World

PETER DOMANIG. By Victor White. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Co. 1944. 704 pp. $3.

Reviewed by ROBERT PICK

TO the stream of recently published novels set in pre-Hitler Vienna (or thereabouts) Mr. White, a new author about whom his publishers say practically nothing, has now added another piece of fiction, and a quite long one at that. But in some respects it happens to be one of the best of the lot.

Mr. White has chosen the very milieu that was the physical, and beyond that remained the spiritual, habitat of countless typical Viennese—a petty bourgeois society, afraid of "proletarianization" and shifting between no longer prosperous trades and those lower ranks of civil service which promised both an old-age pension and the satisfaction of "social standing." His youthful hero lives on the fringes of that world.

The illegitimate child of a beautiful country girl who has gone off to America, Peter Domanig is raised by his aunt, a homely woman of fervent Catholic beliefs. From his earliest childhood he is haunted and depressed by the questionable circumstances of his birth. His sympathies belong to his jovial uncle and guardian, his day dreams to the fashionable world of the imperial capital, which enters his field of vision through a titled friend of his much-admired elder cousin. Timidly he makes friends with some of the "better class" boys at school, again and again discouraged and hampered by his aunt who dreads lest God's wrath descend upon the offspring of sin. She is also the one to foil Peter's longing for higher education. She knows but little of the asocial feelings these stern ways breed in her husband's ward—and, as time comes, even less about a little scoundrel who, furthered in his criminal career by the beginning disorder of war, starts to teach Peter some of his own profitable tricks. An abortive escape brings to a climax the story of the boy's temptations.

The young fellow is soon on the right way again—apparently touched by some signs of affection on the part of his foster family. Now he is even allowed to apply for a place at a military school, but is turned down on account of his embarrassing status. And this is when he decides to make his way from below. He starts as an apprentice with a big hardware store; in addition to the mounting war misery at home, he experiences all the sufferings and humiliations of a Dickensian child character, and, while slowly penetrating the secret of his birth, the full agony of his frustrated aspirations of a more genteel life.

Mr. White has well read Stendhal's "Le Rouge et le Noir." In fact, the protagonist of that classic, the postwar youngster Auguste Sorel, is about the most timely literary figure to be thought of these days. But Auguste Sorel's tragedy cannot be combined with an utterly conventional success story. And this is what the present book—in spite of passages of uninhibited realism, done in the tradition of the idealistic German *Erziehungsroman*—amounts to in the end.

With undeflected singleness of purpose young Peter makes good in his employment. When after the empire's downfall inflation sets in, he quickly learns how to bank on it for his own pocket. As he finally leaves for America, following the belated call of his mother, he has already deposited with a Swiss bank the sizable profits of his, so to speak, extracurricular commercial activities. It almost stands to reason that before his departure he has met a pretty, distinguished Philadelphia girl who probably will be waiting for him at the pier. Cocksure as Mr. Domanig now is of himself, the reader has nothing to worry about his prospects overseas. But he may wonder whether his highfalutin' pioneer talk of industrial plans and engineering abroad convincingly fits into the picture of a young man who has with such passion and a fair amount of cynicism devoted most of his time to making big money through whatever means were at hand. And Peter's still dogged intention to pay off his callous English father sounds equally out of tune in the end.

Thus Mr. White's big novel is far from being wholly satisfactory either as a psychological study or a well-balanced piece of writing. Its prime distinction lies in the minute presentation of the hero's early environment rather than in the development of its main character. Conventionally as the author's aristocrats or his "Socialists," are drawn, his petty bourgeois world, seen through the over-wake eyes of a hapless adolescent, makes for an excellent *image de moeurs*. His book can be recommended first of all as a welcome departure from that stereotyped Vienna of many a recent novel where people seemed to be occupied day and night with nothing but the thought of their cultural mission.

Your Literary I. Q.

By Howard Collins

CHAPTER HEADINGS

The following distinctive chapter headings are taken from well-known novels. How many of their sources can you name? Allowing 5 points for each correct answer, a score of 60 is par, 70 is very good, and 80 or better is excellent. Answers are on page 26.

1. Of the Most Terrifying and Never-to-be-Imagin'd Adventure of the Windmills.
2. How It Came to Pass that Master Cherry the Carpenter Found a Piece of Wood that Laughed and Cried Like a Child.
3. The Utility of Stovepipes.
4. Inconveniences of Following a Handsome Girl in the Street at Night.
5. The Cruise of the Coracle.
6. The Tailless Tyke at Bay.
7. Mr. Osborne Takes Down the Family Bible.
8. In Which Mrs. Harris, Assisted by a Teapot, is the Cause of a Division Between Friends.
9. The Garden of Live Flowers.
10. I Am Born.
11. The Baker Street Irregulars.
12. The Cruel Milkman.
13. Mrs. Poyser "Has Her Say Out."
14. The Pageant of the Table Round.
15. Hot Cheeks and Tearful Eyes.
16. The Last Fight of the Arabella.
17. A Smoky Lady in Step-Ins.
18. A "Viking's Funeral."
19. Don't Get Me Started on That.
20. The Coach and the Berlin.

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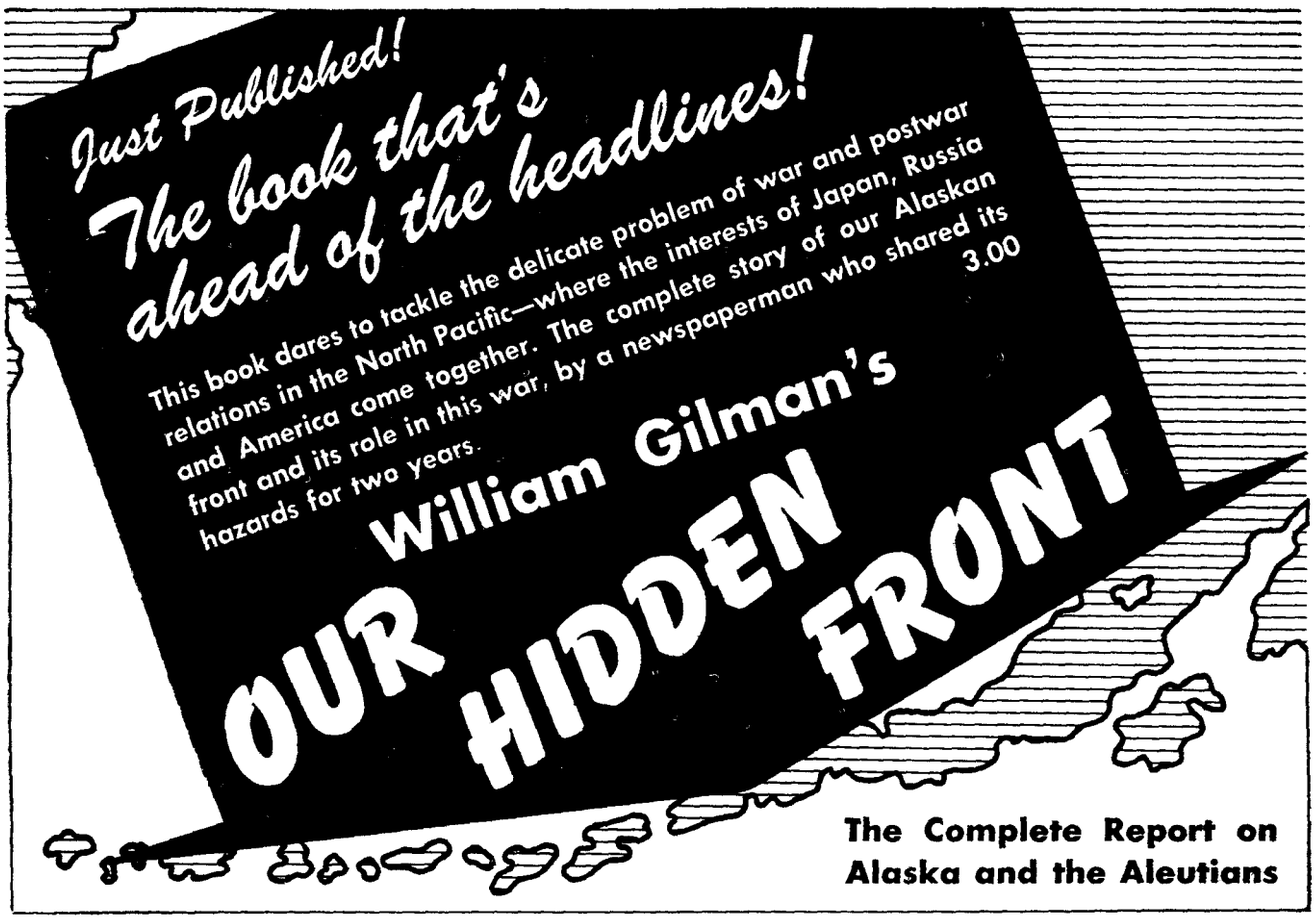
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Inside an Army Camp

FORWARD OBSERVER. By Edwin V. Westrate. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1944. 179 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by FLETCHER PRATT

SOMEBODY should devote adept critical investigation to the process by which the movies are debauching a large part of what should be American fiction, splitting it into two well-defined sections, neither of which has much relation to life. In one division we get the predigested pap suitable for the fourteen-year-old mind that will get past the Hays office; in the other, compendia of everything the Hays office will not pass.

"Call House Madam" and "What Makes Sammy Run" are good examples of the latter; the volume before us here is a particularly irritating case of the former. For it is not cheap, it is not meretricious, except in the essentials. All the minor characters have three dimensions, and even the major ones exhibit that interesting characteristic up to the point where they change their frame of reference from 1944 to "The Idylls of the King." The supporting detail is presented with remarkable fidelity. It appears that the author had some experience as a forward observer in the last war, and he has certainly seen a good deal of the inside of an army camp in this one at the very least.

Even if the detail be autobiographical it is still excellent. It is assembled, selected, and set down with such skill that throughout the early chapters one is never quite sure whether this be not the genuine personal memoirs of an observer quite as skilled in watching human beings as he is in spotting gunfire. The forward observer is an artilleryman who accompanies the infantry up to the front line and phones back instructions to his battery; and if we get so very much of the technique of this art that it tends to submerge the human element, it only so much the more completely produces the suspension of disbelief in preparation for the big moment.

Then comes that big moment, and it turns out to be the moment when the guillotine-knife falls. Our two heroes have gone from the Tunisian front to Algiers on a four-day leave. They meet a WAC, squire her together round the night spots, and all three realize that this is the love of their lives, only she can't make up her mind which. Back at the front one of the two men, the regular battery officer, swaps jobs with his friend, the forward observer, because the latter is worn out; gets far forward at the moment of a German tank attack; calls for a violent barrage on the exact spot where he is stationed. The friend has to order the firing; of course, it stops the tanks and kills the friendly rival, so the other two can be married in an atmosphere of goo and intense phoney tragedy.

The book should make a highly successful movie, particularly as the actress who is to play the lead is carefully indicated. But as a book it as a waste of talent and the reader's time, for even the love passages are carved from that shabbiest of all literary materials—holly-wood.

"These Poems I Have So Loved"

By Leonora Speyer

READING them over and over,
The books of deathless song
Scattered about my bed,
Each with its wide-stretched cover:
These are the friend, the lover.

Poems I have loved the best;
Holding their page to the light,
I read them, call them aloud,
Craving no deeper rest
Than an open book on my breast.

Thus at the end—and lying
As I lie now with their words,
These poems I have so loved,
Their voices, vast, undying,
And my small voice replying.

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"The stuff of the novelist is in her."—*New Yorker*

"Her writing has the freshness of youth, but a vigor and maturity beyond her years. She writes with breadth and concreteness, and, even more uncommonly, with humor, about events that are momentous for both the East and the West."—*N. Y. Herald Tribune Book Review*

"The novel has charm and strength. Lin Taiyi has depicted a striking character in her heroine, a feminist, a modernist, who is more than a match intellectually for most men, and beautiful as well. More than all this, she has given us a picture of a new age in China."—*Chicago Sun Book Week*

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—*N. Y. Times Book Review*

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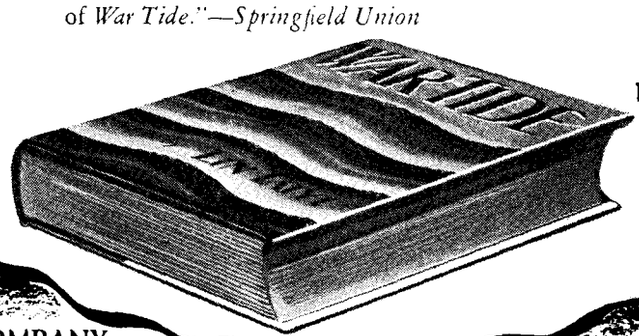

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The Making of an Exact Science

THE LIFE AND WORKS OF THE HONORABLE ROBERT BOYLE. By Louis Trenchard More. New York: Oxford University Press. 1944. 313 *pp.* $4.50.

Reviewed by WALDEMAR KAEMPFFERT

ROBERT BOYLE was a scientist who led alchemy out of the marsh of mysticism and helped to make it an exact science. A cavalier landowner who ruled benignly over immense estates, he had the means to travel, study, acquire the accomplishments of a nobleman, and to experiment. Like Newton he was as much devoted to religion as to science, but made no impression on theology of importance, and like Newton he was one of the more distinguished members of the Royal Society and its president for a time. Though he was not free from the credulousness of his time (he believed in the spurious cures of Greatraks the "stroker") he was one of the leaders in the revolt against scientific dogmatism. He ranged over the whole field of science. With him originated the conception of an element, and it was he who introduced the tests for acidity and alkalinity. He devised a method of preparing phosphorous independently of Brandt, prepared hydrogen but failed to distinguish it from what he called "air generated *de novo*," discovered the law of gaseous elasticity, invented a compressed air pump, constructed the first hermetically sealed thermometers in England, first used freezing mixtures, observed the effect of pressure on boiling, dabbled in electricity and magnetism, determined the specific gravities and refractive powers of various substances, and attempted to weigh light. It was as an exponent of the experimental method that Boyle shone.

Dr. More reviews Boyle's accomplishments and place in science in a biography which is intended for scholars who are interested in the history of science, but which can be read with profit by any one. He places Boyle where he belongs as a skeptical scientist who must rank with Newton, Kepler, and Galileo even though he made no discovery of the Newton or Galileo magnitude and served primarily in guiding science, especially chemistry, into the channels that it has followed for the last three centuries. Dr. More is much more than a chronicler. He is both a critic and interpreter. Yet this reviewer wishes that a more modern approach had been made. No scientist makes discoveries as if he were not influenced by the social atmosphere in which he lives. Dr. More knows it but treats these social influences much too casually. Yet this is a book which stands out as a well written and conscientious account of a great scientist's life and works and which deserves a much better index than the one provided.

ANSWERS TO LITERARY QUIZ

1. "Don Quixote," by Cervantes.
2. "Pinocchio," by Carlos Collodi.
3. "The Three Musketeers," by Alexandre Dumas.
4. "The Hunchback of Notre Dame," by Victor Hugo.
5. "Treasure Island," by Robert Louis Stevenson.
6. "Bob Son of Battle," by Alfred Ollivant.
7. "Vanity Fair," by William Makepeace Thackeray.
8. "Martin Chuzzlewit," by Charles Dickens.
9. "Through the Looking Glass," by Lewis Carroll.
10. "David Copperfield," by Charles Dickens.
11. "The Sign of the Four," by Conan Doyle.
12. "Beautiful Joe," by Marshall Saunders.
13. "Adam Bede," by George Eliot.
14. "Penrod," by Booth Tarkington.
15. "Far From the Madding Crowd," by Thomas Hardy.
16. "Captain Blood," by Rafael Sabatini.
17. "Topper," by Thorne Smith.
18. "Beau Geste," by P. C. Wren.
19. "So Little Time," by John Marquand.
20. "Anthony Adverse," by Hervey Allen.

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Swallowing an Oyster Alive
The Glorious Whitewasher
The Talking Mule
The Jumping Frog
Thar She Blows
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The Putrified Forest
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CROWN *Publishers, 419 4th Ave., New York 16, N.Y.*

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American "Loyalists"

TREASON. By Robert Gessner. New York: Charles Scribner's & Sons. 1944. 383 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by RICHARD A. CORDELL

"TREASON" is possibly the most cynical novel yet written about the American Revolution, cynical not because the author is skeptical about causes and objectives of the audacious move to secede from the mighty empire, but because he frankly treats the war primarily as a civil conflict with not many more than half the colonists desiring independence, and with the native opponents of self-government more obstructive and insidious than the British themselves. The title of the novel refers to the defection of Benedict Arnold, who passed from the Revolution's most spectacular and perhaps most successful general to our first notable quisling. The novel adequately traces the roots of his discontent, and without condoning his betrayal makes it at least in part understandable. The story might have been even more powerful if Arnold were the central character, but the novelist chooses to make one of the general's young aides the chief adventurer in this somewhat cynical romance.

The most striking feature of "Treason" is its topicality. Perhaps the author stresses too hard the parallelism between the 1770's and our day, but the likenesses are startling and depressing. The property-minded wanted not a better world but a more profitable one. Colonial fascists feared mobocracy and any change that would affect business. When the right to exploit and profiteer was challenged, the familiar cry about "good old free American enterprise" was raised. The petty struggles between individual colonies and the Congress over "rights" blocked the prosecution of the war and hamstrung Washington. Other parallels are even more pointed: Jew-baiting, use of the phrase "new order," the scorched-earth policy, the brass-hat generals (with General Gates the brassiest hat of them all), the gathering of tories at "Cliveden," the great country house at Germantown, etc. The contemporaneousness may be overdone a bit for some readers, but it is, on the whole, effective. There is a persistent modernity about the characters and their thinking; and although one is conscious of 18th century manners, furniture, dress, etc., one is grateful to the novelist for not pushing that century down our throats.

Much of the story takes place in Philadelphia, the most notorious Loyalist center. In Boston and New York practically all the upper class opposed the war, but in Pennsylvania the majority of people of all classes from the beginning to the end of the struggle opposed independence. Toward the end of the book the scene shifts to West Point, from which in an exciting climax Arnold escapes to the British lines. The story does not deal with his tragic after-years. The Hemingway-like romance between Arnold's young aide and the rebel daughter of a Loyalist merchant gives a conventional framework to the novel, but our sharpest interest is in Arnold and his Tory wife, the "perennial college senior" Hamilton, the foppish André, the rigid, upright Washington, and other historical figures who come to life in the pages of this vigorous novel.

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M. Cot's Reply

TRIUMPH OF TREASON. By Pierre Cot. Chicago: Ziff-Davis Publishing Co. 1943. 432 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by FREDERICK GRUIN

TEN years ago Pierre Cot was one of the bright young men of French politics. A small, intense, dapper Savoyard, he came of devout Catholic, *petit bourgeois* stock. Only thirty-seven, he had served through World War I, had been a professor of law, had learned practical politics as the mayor of his mountain village and as a Radical Socialist Deputy in the Chamber at Paris. Then, between 1933 and 1938, the traditional struggle of Right and Left reached a peak of bitterness. Few Frenchmen fought more ardently for the Popular Front than Pierre Cot; few were more savagely smeared by the reactionary opposition. During his tenure as Popular Front Aviation Minister he was called a tool of Moscow, an administrative bumbler, the wrecker of French aviation. When the men of Vichy took power, they deprived Pierre Cot of his citizenship, made him along with Leon Blum and Edouard Daladier a scapegoat of French defeat, pilloried him in absentia at the notorious, abortive Riom Trial of 1941.

"Triumph of Treason" is Pierre Cot's reply to his calumniators. It is also a powerful, dignified defense of the Popular Front and a stinging, mordant attack on the Vichyites. M. Cot wrote his work while in exile in the United States, put into it all his legal and scholastic skill, designed it as an exhaustive analysis of the true causes of French defeat. In this book those who believe that Washington's appeasement of Vichy and the vestiges of Vichy in North Africa stands as one of the sorriest blunders of American foreign policy will find ample argument for their point of view.

M. Cot argues as a confirmed Leftist, as a self-styled democrat who would never trust French or European democracy in the hands of the Right. He says: "I believe that a synthesis, uniting the spirit of the French and Russian Revolutions, can give Europe the formula capable of renewing its political ideology and rejuvenating its democracies." He quotes Clemenceau's remark: "The men of the Right . . . are not only stupid but the wickedest." He asserts that "the state of mind of the French Fascists, for a democrat, is as difficult to understand as it is for a civilized man to understand the state of mind of the Hottentot." On the men of the Right he puts the blame for French misfortune.

The essential causes of his country's

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military defeat in 1940, says M. Cot, were three: First, the isolation of France through the failure of collective security and the withering of the Franco-Soviet alliance. Second, the weakness of the French Army, which sprang from the decadence of the General Staff. Third, the disunity of the nation, sharpened by the moral collapse of the ruling class, of bankers, industrialists, generals, and aristocrats. This thesis M. Cot supports with a long, formidable, often brilliant, sometimes tedious and repetitive array of facts, figures, opinions, and citations. It is a superb lawyer's brief.

The decline of collective security was, of course, an international fault, reaching its nadir at Munich where the sacrifice of Czechoslovakia spelled also the spurning of Russia. If French Rightists saw no evil consequence in the turn from the First Communist State, neither did the British Conservatives nor their American counterparts. But the ineffectiveness of the Third Republic's Army is another matter.

At the Riom Trial Marshal Pétain tried, and signally failed, to pin the blame for military collapse on the Popular Front Government of 1936-38. M. Cot's classic analysis of Riom's published testimony, plus his illuminating inside knowledge of Popular Front Administration, puts the responsibility, devastatingly and beyond refutation, at the doorstep of the Marshal himself. From 1918 to 1936, the hero of Verdun dominated French national defense. Though the great Foch despised Pétain, though Clemenceau and Poincaré considered him a defeatist, though age overtook him, he never retired, never relaxed his grip. He was the apostle of the war of position, the first believer in the Maginot Line. He topped the hierarchy of generals who resisted new concepts, sniffed at air power, ignored Charles de Gaulle's cry for mechanization, ossified the French military structure, worried more about domestic revolutionaries than foreign foes, surrendered in 1940 with forty per cent of their tanks and sixty per cent of their planes unused, predicted that in fifteen days more the British Empire would have its neck wrung like a chicken. History, says M. Cot, will finally judge whether this was incompetence or treason.

At Riom, Daladier found courage to say: "The hatred of novelty, the hatred of intellectual daring, the hatred of everything modern led the French Army to its ruin." No pressure or plot by Pétain could still this kind of charge; the Chief of State had suddenly to close the trial. His ancient arm had thrown a boomerang.

When M. Cot speaks of the moral collapse of the French "ruling class" he is on touchy ground. As a legislator, he was part of the Government. But he has in mind the other and dominant part of the Government: the Right groups, representing wealth and position, who cried, "Better Hitler than Blum," who favored the fascism of Franco in Spain, who supported the fascism of the outlawed hooded Cagoulard at home. M. Cot recalls a Cabinet meeting at which the shocked hint went around that the Cagoule

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reached up in the military hierarchy to Pétain himself. He says flatly that the Cagoule now has men in North Africa behind General Henri Giraud.

This is the note on which M. Cot concludes his study. The Vichyites, he warns, are secretly currying power in Algiers. Though the first objective of all patriotic Frenchmen must be the liberation of *la patrie,* they must be vigilant against the men of the Right as well as the men of Germany. He holds no torch for the Committee of National Liberation: it "includes no workers or peasants; most of its members are financiers and industrialists, belonging to the groups which have favored collaboration. . . . Its composition is a cause of weakness." As for General De Gaulle: as the symbol of French resistance, he has grown in stature, but there is a danger the French masses will rally around him instead of an ideology, which event would be a step toward fascism.

The best remedy for France—and here M. Cot speaks to Washington and London interventionists, as well as to the Algiers Committee—would be "a reawakening of democratic political life in North Africa." That reawakening, as a matter of fact, seems under way. Since he finished "Triumph of Treason," M. Cot has gone to Algiers to take a seat in the new Consultative Assembly. There the Right promptly assailed him as an incompetent ex-Minister of Aviation. Proudly M. Cot admitted sending French planes to the Spanish Loyalists. He believes the Popular Front needs to be revived, with more muscle; he holds there can be "no political or international democracy without economic democracy."

The Inevitable Conflict of the Machine

A TIME IS BORN. By Garet Garrett. New York: Pantheon Books, Inc. 1944. 234 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by WILLIAM S. LYNCH

IN his latest book Garet Garrett assembles the results of his speculations on the modern economic processes that employ machine technics. In doing so he joins the ranks of thinkers as diverse as Arnold Toynbee, Eugene O'Neill, Lewis Mumford, and those others who have been provoked by modern technology to ponder on the nature and function of the machine. To some of them it has seemed a Promethean gift of mankind; to others, it has appeared in the shape of Frankenstein's monster. Mr. Garrett knows that it is both. Using parable and analogy he explains the way in which mechanical invention has gleaned the fruits of the earth and at the same time produced the harvest of social and political evils which are familiar to all of us.

Mr. Garrett has been gazing at the economic scene for some time now, as financial journalist, as writer of books on economic themes, and as an editor of *The Saturday Evening Post.* Widely traveled, well-read, and soundly grounded in his Henry George, he can make the commonplace profound and the complicated lucid. There is simplicity in his thinking which is disquieting in its starkness. In a manner at once disarming and oracular he makes his case for the biological principle of the machine. The concept of an almost physiological evolution of the machine is one that he reaches only by analogy, and that analogy seems strained at times. There are moments when Mr. Garrett's poetical treatment of his subject suggests those vexing pictures of shiny pistons and highlighted wheels which delight some modern photographers.

To be sure, the author reminds the reader and himself that "all wheels run by faith" and that the machine is basically an extension of man, the tool-bearing animal. But there is also in Mr. Garrett's exposition a suggestion of determinism, a feeling that there are natural laws inherent in the principles of technology which lead remorselessly along fated paths. Those paths to date have crossed some horrid country. There have been wars, imperialism, etc., as the delicate balance between industrial peoples and agricultural peoples has been destroyed. But there are greener hills ahead, the author says. The old limited sources of power, the coal and the oil, will be replaced by the plenty of plastics and chemistry. Different regions of the globe need not look enviously at one another, for the air will be filched of products to replace those which were available in the past only in remote areas. With economic sources of friction removed, the millenium of peace will arrive. Mr. Garrett's picture is an attractive one, but the logic by which he arrives at it does not always seem complete. We want his world desperately but could wish him more convincing. We could wish also that in his account of the modern machine and its effect on world economy he might have touched less lightly on the equally vital effect it has had in the psychological and cultural realms of man's activities.

BUY BONDS
TO SPEED VICTORY

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Building of a Modern State

TURKEY: KEY TO THE EAST. By Chester M. Tobin. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1944. 170 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by FRANK GREELEY

AN international YMCA'er of many years' experience in the Near and Middle East, Mr. Tobin has done a stoutly opinionated portrait of "the real Turks and their vibrant progressive nation." The sons of Kemal Ataturk have managed their neutral affairs with such deftness and dignity, despite jogging Axis and Allied elbows, that they hardly seem to need an apologist. But Mr. Tobin apparently feels that the world of 1944 still carries over from the world of 1914 an unjust suspicion of "the Terrible Turk." To set the record straight, he has written this book, with unprofessorial gusto and an eye on what he calls "historical realism."

The result is a breezy mixture—part a defense of modern Turkey's course, part a scolding for European imperialists, part a popular history and primer. Mr. Tobin has open sympathy for the Turks, but by and large it is a balanced sympathy. He lived and worked among the Turks during the years of their national renaissance; his book catches a good deal of the first-hand excitement of that notable period. Mr. Tobin also has a popular historian's perspective; his survey of Turkey's past is colorful and vigorous writing.

The past goes back a long way, of course. In a swiftly paced chapter, Mr. Tobin retells some of the bloody history of the strategic Dardanelles, the moat between Europe and Asia. He sketches the rise and fall of the Ottoman Empire. He minces no words over the decadent sultans. But he thinks most Western students have failed to distinguish between "the Ottoman reigning clique and the hardy, honest, and simple Turkish people." These people, fiercely nationalistic, were the bedrock on which Ataturk and his comrades built.

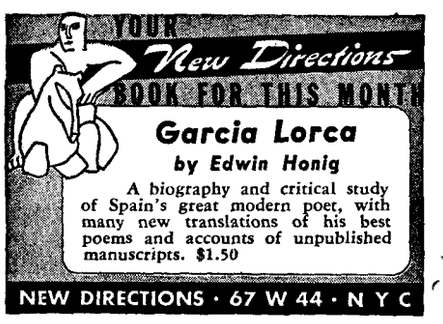
Mr. Tobin has blistering indignation for Ottoman and European imperialism. He views with distaste the "so-called holy wars" of Cross and Crescent, which were a "perversion to serve human greed" and a desecration of "the spirit of God and man." He sees the 200-year-long rivalry of Russians, Germans, French, and British in the Middle East as a "thieving caravan" and persistent gathering of "vultures."

The vultures gathered for their biggest feast when they fashioned the 1920 Treaty of Sèvres. Mr. Tobin has harsh words, and rightly so, for this peace which the victorious Allies sought to impose on Turkey. The Sèvres Treaty not only carved up the last slice of the Ottoman Empire but, by subdividing the Anatolian heart of Turkey, it would have destroyed a nation. Kemal Ataturk led his countrymen through an unyielding fight against Greek invaders and other Allied pressure. By 1922 the Allies had enough. By 1923 they were ready to sign the Treaty of Lausanne, a great diplomatic victory for the new, tightly bordered Turkey.

Then began "the political miracle of our day": the building of the modern Turkish state. The job was done, says Mr. Tobin enthusiastically, "with a rapidity that staggered even mass-production, speed-minded Americans." The dominating personality, of course, was Kemal Ataturk. Mr. Tobin recalls again the career and credo of this remarkable leader who lived hard and ruled hard, who decreed that "the government must finally rest with the people and be in the interest of the people."

Mr. Tobin knows that Turkey is no democracy as the people of the United States understand the word. It is a one-party state; its elections are not completely free; it controls the organs of opinion. But he believes firmly that Turkey's rulers are guiding their nation toward the democratic goal; after all, they have been on the job for little more than two decades after seven centuries of sultanic rule.

In World War II the Turks have not had much thought to spare for democratic development. In their key spot at the crossroads of the Middle East, they have had their hands full. They resisted German pressure when Allied fortunes in the Middle East were desperately low. Now, they seem to be resisting Allied pressure when the Germans prospects are not bright. But Mr. Tobin is convinced that history may well "appraise Turkey's stubborn neutrality as saving the Allied cause and making possible a final, complete victory." He is certain that, first and foremost, the Turks want "self-preservation as an independent, sovereign nation."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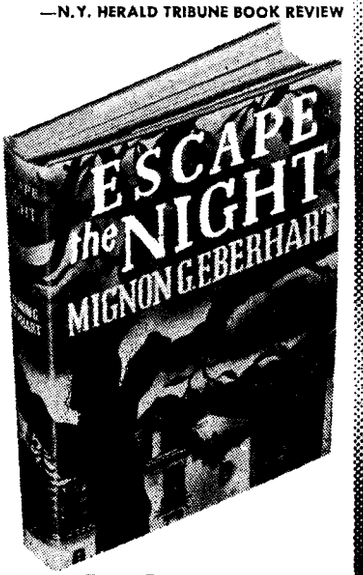

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The Phoenix Nest

USO—USA

WE took the Wrightstown road to see the camp,
Two years ago, the journalist and I.
Within my mind I heard the shuffling stamp
Up wooden steps, the voices, and the tramp
Of feet—the red triangle of the "Y"
Out of a quarter-century ago!
But no! They talked about the "USO"—
Diversion and regale for every race,
For all our differing faiths a meeting-place
Serving the old American faith again
That nerves the sinews of our fighting men. . . .

In blunt small armored cars called "jeeps" and "peeps"
The soldiers passed through Saturday afternoon.
Within the club the United Service keeps
We saw men reading, heard the radio croon,
Scanned the tanned face, the city face, the sad
And sallow face, the face of the farmer-lad. . . .
Again around me seemed the old khaki brown
As the years rolled back; this was another town,
Another camp; and other trucks rolled by
Past long low buildings under a Texas sky
For another war. . . . I gazed around me then.
This wasn't the old "Y" or the canteen
That I recalled. And weren't we older men
When I was younger? Never had I seen
A club with rooms like this, the neat array
Of pictures, books, the solid restful chairs.
It all seemed bright that day. It all looked gay.
They sang around the piano. From upstairs
Rimsky-Korsakoff's magic music flowed
From the victrola. A wide and polished floor
Gleamed for the evening's dance. Outside, the road
Rumbled and jarred with trucks and guns of war. . . .

Later I saw the dusty marching ranks,
The barracks and the tents. I saw, surprised,
Though I expected them, the snouted tanks—
My war, you see, had been unmotorized!
In the camp of Negro troops we found again
The same neat clubhouse and the same good cheer
To be remembered by enheartened men
Fronting the face of danger far from here,
When flickers through the smoke from man to man
The spirit of combat that will win this war,
That held the desperate fox-holes on Bataan
And manned the batteries of Corregidor. . . .

It was in their poise, their quick American grins,
Frankness and friendliness, all set to go,
Weathered and husky; as to eyes and chins,
Straightgazing, square—they don't say much, you know.
They know their friends will help them all they can,
From Coast to Coast, rising to setting sun—
The sixteen workers to every fighting-man;
The folk of the USO, the Six in One.
. . .

Hostess, director, workers on every hand
In groups and classes, actors who volunteer,
Gag-men and clowns of shows, the lively band,
The dancing partners come from far and near,
I heard of, then—and heard the word of light
That fires the heart and kindles all the brain
To keep one single purpose burning bright:
The human bond we must not lose again.
Now is the time to keep it burning—now!
Where, as one army, every race and creed
Advance for the invasion, with their vow
To see the peoples of all Europe freed
. . . .

Not where the politicians rail and scheme,
But here, through battle, goes our undying dream!

Ours is an ambiguous language. "Outrageous!" exclaimed a woman bustling along the street, shaking her newspaper at her astonished companion. "On the eve of invasion, and a British monopoly in the necktie business! I'm glad Stettinius called them. I'm glad he did!" She chucked her paper indignantly into the nearest trash receiver. A puzzled witness of the incident retrieved it, and scanned the page for evidence of the lady's extraordinary assertion. Then he found the headline. It read, "Stettinius Calls British Tie Firm." We might say that *Headline English* is an ambiguous language!

This item flitted into my mind the other day, and I couldn't ged rid of it. It sing-songed over and over:

Well I may be perfectly screwy
But all the dull people like Dewey—
You meet 'em and see.

That, again, may have been something I overheard in the street that my mind had registered subconsciously!

Dorothy B. Acheson of Brookline, Massachusetts, is hereby thanked for her cordial letter anent my correspondence with Senator Taft. She ap-

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
ESCAPE THE NIGHT *Mignon Eberhart* (Random: $2.)	Expertly wrought combination of murder, thrills by night, and fervid romance with well-hidden killer and exciting finish.	Girl returns to California rancho from N. Y., gets tangled in triple murder—and nearly makes fourth corpse. Capt. Quayle officiates.	Good
THE SECRET OF THE SPA *Charles L. Leonard* (Crime Club: $2.)	Private detective Kilgerrin convalesces from Moroccan wounds at posh Jersey sanitarium and cracks a dope distributing plot.	Half a dozen killings, a lurid lot of characters, an indestructible and likable sleuth, and mile-a-minute action.	Grim and gory
A.T.S. MYSTERY *Gilbert Coverack* (Macmillan: $2.)	Grenade kills one English girl-soldier, another is strangled. Insp. McBride handles case.	Method of telling tale is slightly confusing. Beyond that it's good British war-time brand detecting, with an affable hero.	Average
BURY THE HATCHET *Manning Long* (Duell, Sloan & Pearce: $2.50)	Liz and Gordon Parrott, also I-Am the cat, desert Manhattan for island in upper Hudson where they solve several slayings.	Sprightly sleuthing duo tangle with eccentric lot of summer colonists, dig up some sinister old scandals, and satisfactorily attend to new developments.	Good baffler
THE CASE BOOK OF JIMMY LAVENDER *Vincent Starrett* (Gold Label: $2.50)	Collected exploits of suave and perspicacious Chicago private operative.	Good omnibus of short stories—all of them well plotted and excellently worked out—with a few humdingers.	For the short-story shelf

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parently liked my poem about Congress. She says she has recently given a good deal of time to the reading of the *Congressional Record.*

> It often amazes me in this reading, how many of our representatives are Republicans or Democrats before they are Americans or thinking men. Perhaps since I am on the subject of Congress, I may write about the part of the Constitution which I am informed Congress has the duty of enforcing, and to uphold which each member of Congress took an oath. . . . I refer to Article XIV section 2, which says in part, "But when the right to vote at any election for the choice of electors for President and Vice President of the United States, representatives in Congress, the executive and judicial officers of a State, or the members of the legislature thereof, is denied to any of the male inhabitants or in any way abridged, except for participation in rebellion, or other crime, the *basis of representation* therein shall be *reduced* in the proportion which the number of such male citizens shall bear to the whole number of male citizens twenty-one years of age in such state." Why doesn't Congress, that passes on the admission of elected representatives, see to it that representation in the states which disqualify large numbers of voters (mostly poll-tax states) conforms to this? During the soldier-vote fight it was sickening to read speeches of Congressmen who said they had sworn to uphold the Constitution and *all* of the Constitution, and by God they were going to!—for they paid no attention at all to the above section of the above Article! I must say that *I* was informed of the importance of this amendment in Charles Beard's "Republic."

Most of the loudest Constitution-shouters are usually but imperfectly familiar with that document.

Frances Ames Randall of Duxbury, Massachusetts, has also written to agree with me about the Soldiers Vote Bill. These New England ladies are very enheartening! Louis E. Asher of Chicago is also very kind to write me about what he believes to be my "clear and perfect reply to Senator Taft's letter." As for the West, Mrs. Royal Stilman Reed of Cheyenne, Wyoming, writes to tell me of the State law out there:

> Knowing of your interest in the Soldiers Vote Law I would like to call your attention to the law recently passed by the special session of the Wyoming Legislature and signed by our Governor, Lester C. Hunt, Democrat. Under the law, the soldiers does not need to ask for a ballot, but it is the duty of the County Clerk in each county to obtain the correct address from every draft board and mail to every soldier a ballot. We understand it is the best soldiers' vote in all the United States. Your crusade must go on.

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

PERSONALS

ADVERTISEMENTS will be accepted in this column for things wanted or unwanted; personal services to let or required; literary or publishing offers not easily classified elsewhere; miscellaneous items appealing to a special and intelligent clientèle; jobs wanted, houses or camps for rent, tutoring, traveling companions, ideas for sale; communications of a decorous nature, expressions of opinion (limited to fifty lines). Ads of a strictly personal nature are limited to an exchange of correspondence, thus also enabling an exchange of reference. Rates: 10 cents per word including signature. Count two additional words for Box and Number. Payment in full must be received eight days in advance of publication. We forward all mail received in answer to box numbers. Address Personal Dept., Saturday Review, 25 West 45th Street, New York 19, N. Y.

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PERSONALS

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(*Continued on page* 34)

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PERSONALS

(*Continued from page* 33)

ENNUI engulfing erudite, ebullient Enoch. Help! Box 543-J.

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The Crostics Club

HAS anybody any further comments on my column of last week? Dr. Wallace Davis suggests, for those who get behind in these busy days, that the answers to the *SRL* DCs be printed upside-down. A show of hands?

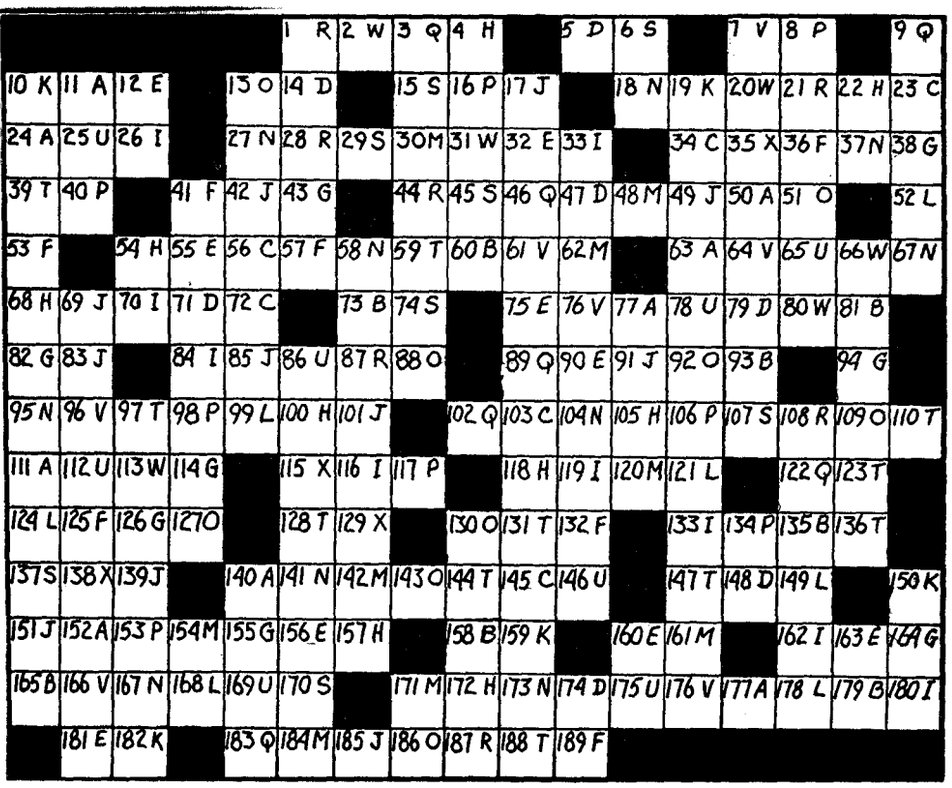
Mrs. Herbert Agar, listed in WBD as a writer under her name, Eleanor Carroll Chilton, tells of her "delight, the other day, while I was working on a puzzle in your last book, in coming across one taken from my husband's book, 'A Time for Greatness.' The fine moment in any working of a DC is the one when a jumble of symbols suddenly becomes recognition—not complete, but recognition in the sense of the pattern of meaning. To have had a double recognition was grand, and moved me to write to you." The passage referred to, abridged as it is, is worthy of repetition: "Change is constant and inevitable; improvement . . . is the hard-won product of human will. In order to change, a man needs only to lie at home in bed and let the years work on him; but if he wishes to improve he must work on himself."

Up till now I've desisted from bringing any members of my family into this column, but as I do think the following worthy of being passed on, here it is with a shudder as I contemplate that last line:

TO NO. 527

Am I fan or fool or martyr
I should tackle such a tartar?
Started with my soul "at best"
Frighted soon by a "barghest."
Riding rails a boy's pastime,
Never played at "riding rhyme."
My poor sense found nothing teasier.
Than sensational "esthesia."
Why your faithful should you "twink"
And drive to nervous breakdown brink?
All my appetite was wasted
On that savory "high-tasted."
Expletively I grew lavish
Hunting for that low-down "raffish."
Child birth in the Roman manner
Might be "Lucina" or "Lavana."
Drop by drop I grew frustrated
By cacophonous "guttated."
Three whole evenings "on the go."
"Noh Play" with Japs, our crafty foe.
Red-eyed when I found "Pichincha."
E.S.K. I fain would lynch her.
Puzzle authors have their tricks—
Was it "Bolch" or "Mensheviks?"
Heretofore I've borne your "yokes."
Why do you "estreat" such folks?
Now your viands I've "rehashed"
At my ignorance I'm abashed.
If like that you print another
You'll lose a fan and kill a brother.

As a rule I hand it to the composer of the above for adroitness in puzzling. He had told me how in the Roberts DC, having guessed the first letter of *Berossos* he placed his hand over the names under B in the Biographical Section of WNL and ran down dates until he came to a 3rd century one—and it fitted. E. S. K.



Double-Crostics: No. 530

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-four words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (1940 edition).

The solution of last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 13 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. Italian defeat in World War I, 1917.

B. Kinetic.

C. Surface decoration of inlaid pattern of colored stones, glass, etc.

D. German dominion of which Queen Caroline, wife of George II of England, was titled.

E. Musical extravaganza by Arthur Sullivan (1866) (D'Oyly Carte production).

F. To form a rope by twisting strands together clockwise (comp.)

G. Every ninth.

H. A part of the day.

I. Dwarfs in possession of the Ring won by Siegfried (Ger. myth. and Wagner).

J. A symbol used to inflame to retaliative action or anger (after our Civil War) (2 wds.)

K. Worthless refuse.

L. A supplementary instrument or performer (Music.)

M. To wink.

N. An improvement (like the market).

O. Intense darkness; blackness.

P. To strip of hair.

Q. In the nature of a significant event.

R. Constructing (a building).

S. A phase of Indian home-rule in favor of home manufactures to the boycott of foreign goods.

T. Athenian philosopher, founder of Cynic School—follower of Socrates.

U. To dress or smarten up (humorous).

V. To raise from beneath.

W. French Napoleonic victory over the Austrians—1797.

X. *Hills* region of Assam and Burma (Br. India).

WORDS

24 140 63 50 77 11 111 177 152

135 158 93 60 179 81 73 165

72 103 145 34 23 56

5 14 71 47 79 174 148

75 181 55 160 32 12 90 156 163

125 132 53 41 57 36 189

43 114 38 126 94 82 155 164

100 105 22 54 118 4 68 172 157

116 70 84 162 26 119 180 33 133

185 101 83 91 151 139 17 42 49 85 69

19 182 159 150 10

99 168 124 178 149 121 52

161 120 171 30 184 48 142 154 62

58 18 167 27 67 173 95 37 104 141

51 13 88 109 143 130 92 127 186

117 8 153 16 106 134 40 98

3 9 46 102 122 89 183

28 1 44 187 21 87 108

6 137 107 45 170 74 15 29

110 97 147 128 39 188 131 123 144 136 59

65 112 78 86 169 25 146 175

166 176 7 96 64 61 76

66 80 2 113 20 31

129 115 35 138

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By OSMOND K. FRAENKEL

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